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NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. APRIL 1988

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The Forgotten Message of 'A Nation At Risk'

Five years later, teacher Betsy Tulis remembers *See page 4*

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

A Cruel Catch-22

Today, an estimated 500,000 to 700,000 American children find themselves trapped in a Catch-22 of the cruelest kind. These children are homeless—the innocent victims of an economic cataclysm that has left families destitute and our nation morally paralyzed.

These children, already in a struggle for shelter, clothing, and medical care, are now struggling for an education, for the one vehicle that can lift them out of hopelessness. But hopelessness persists. For across the country—and here's the rub—school districts have closed their doors to them—just because they're homeless.

Why? Because many state and local residency requirements bar from public school any child who has no permanent address.

According to *Broken Lives: Denial of Education to Homeless Children*—a report by the New York-based National Coalition for the Homeless—"43 percent of homeless school-age children do not attend school." In some cases, the report adds, "education is not denied outright but rather through deprivation of the means necessary to obtain it. And in all cases, the basic point remains: without the stability of a permanent home, any meaningful education is extremely difficult."

The result: deprived children become still more deprived—deprived of "a much needed sense of place and continuity that they otherwise lack in their fragmented lives."

Unlike the children of migrant workers, who have homes but change addresses frequently, homeless children and their families live in temporary shelters, welfare hotels, cars, abandoned buildings, alleyways.

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

Homeless children are victimized by circumstances beyond their control—then victimized again simply because they are victims.

My heart aches for these homeless children—maybe in part because I knew poverty as a child. I remember the times I didn't have shoes to wear. And I remember, with pain that lingers still, my mother's heroic efforts to balance three separate jobs and yet never for a moment neglect her children. I remember, too, how neighbors sometimes would ask if we'd eaten, and if we said no, they'd feed us.

Yes, I knew poverty. But I had a home. And that sustained me.

But increasing numbers of American children today must do without that sustenance. When these same children are denied access to an education, they are denied the last source of hope they may ever know.

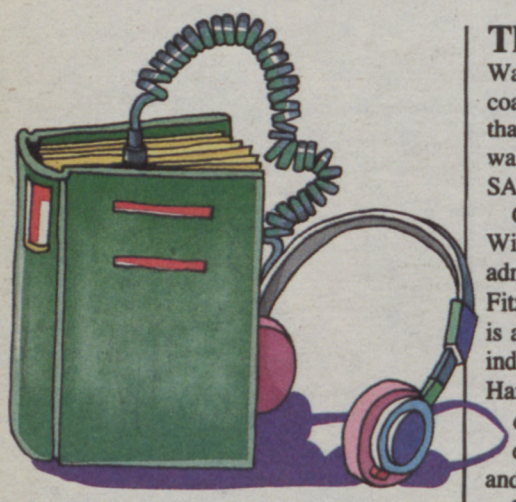
In July 1987, Congress at long last recognized the need to educate homeless children by passing the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act—and appropriating $5 million to fund it. Under the Act, state departments of education can apply for federal funds to develop programs to "provide for the education of each homeless child or homeless youth."

Unfortunately, this initiative doesn't go far enough. If each of the estimated 700,000 homeless children in America were given an equal portion of the $5 million pie, each child's share would amount to $7.14—enough, at best, for a six-month supply of paper, pencils, and pens.

Now, to make matters worse, the Reagan Administration proposes total elimination of this federal program to help states educate homeless children.

This is unconscionable. And I am convinced it runs counter to the will of the American people. For they know that national security cannot rest on policies of child neglect. They know, too, that compassion for the less fortunate is at the heart of our democracy. They know, above all, that now is no time for heart failure. □

TRENDS



Let Your Ears Do the Reading

Have a pile of books you'd love to read but never seem to have time to start?

Try listening to books on audio tape while you're washing dishes, exercising, or commuting to work, suggests books-on-tape advocate Gail Forman in a recent *Washington Post* article. Times that used to be "intellectually empty" can be now filled with the words of authors like Jane Austen or John Gardner, points out Forman, who teaches English at Montgomery College in Maryland.

"I feel an unmatched intimacy with a book whose words enter my head through earphones," says Forman. "After all, language is primarily sound, and when a well-written book is read aloud, each word counts, as it should."

The Mick Jagger Blues

Was it, perhaps, after investing in coaching for the Scholastic Aptitude Test that the Rolling Stones' lead singer wailed the lyrics "I can't get no SATisfaction"?

Could just be—at least according to William Fitzsimmons, director of admissions at Harvard University. Fitzsimmons charges that SAT coaching is a waste of time and money. And an independent study of more than 1,500 Harvard freshmen shows no appreciable difference in test scores between those entering students who were coached and those who weren't.

Comments Fitzsimmons: "The coaching industry is playing on parental anxiety. Parents want to make sure they're doing enough, but spending time on coaching takes time away from working on getting good high school grades, on extracurricular activities, or community service, all of which are important when admissions officers are choosing a class."

The Incredible Shrinking Semester

More money for less class time. That's the disturbing trend greeting today's college students.

As recently as 20 years ago, most American universities offered two 17-week semesters. Now most colleges have 15-week semesters, while still others offer only a 28- or 29-week academic year.

During this same period, the average cost of tuition, room, and board has risen from $1,000 to $6,000 a year at public colleges, and from $2,000 to $12,000 a year at private colleges.

But the less-for-more tide is turning. In Missouri, for example, Gov. John Ashcroft has convinced at least one college—Northwest Missouri State—to lengthen its semesters from 15 weeks to 18. And in Washington, D.C., students and faculty at George Washington University are pressing to stretch their semesters from 13 weeks to 14.

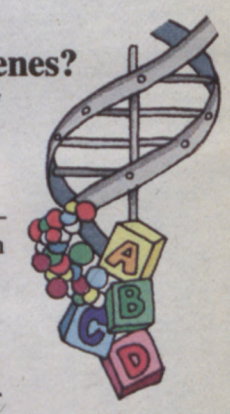
Saying No To Just Saying No

The children of children are a fast-growing population. And their numbers appear unlikely to decrease anytime soon.

A 1986 national poll of 12- to 17-year-olds, conducted by Planned Parenthood, shows that one of nine American children aged 14 or younger has had sexual intercourse. Among the group surveyed, one of five 14-year-olds and one of 10 13-year-olds claimed to be sexually experienced.

Among the 12-year-olds, 4 percent said they'd tried sex. Translated into raw numbers, this means that more than 120,000 12-year-olds are sexually active.

Spelling Genes?



Children's ability to spell correctly may be less a matter of genius than of genetics—less dependent on diligence than on genes.

That's the word from English professor Kenneth G. Wilson of the University of Connecticut. Wilson maintains that spelling ability is neuromuscular—like a natural golf swing or a violinist's touch. Some have it, some don't. Spelling virtuosity, says Wilson, is likely the product not of repetitive drill but of innate, genetically transmitted ability.

"We teach the child to be logical, and this works out in most of life," Wilson says. "But not in spelling. A great deal of time and work in education would be saved if we could spell the way we speak."

That sez it awl. □

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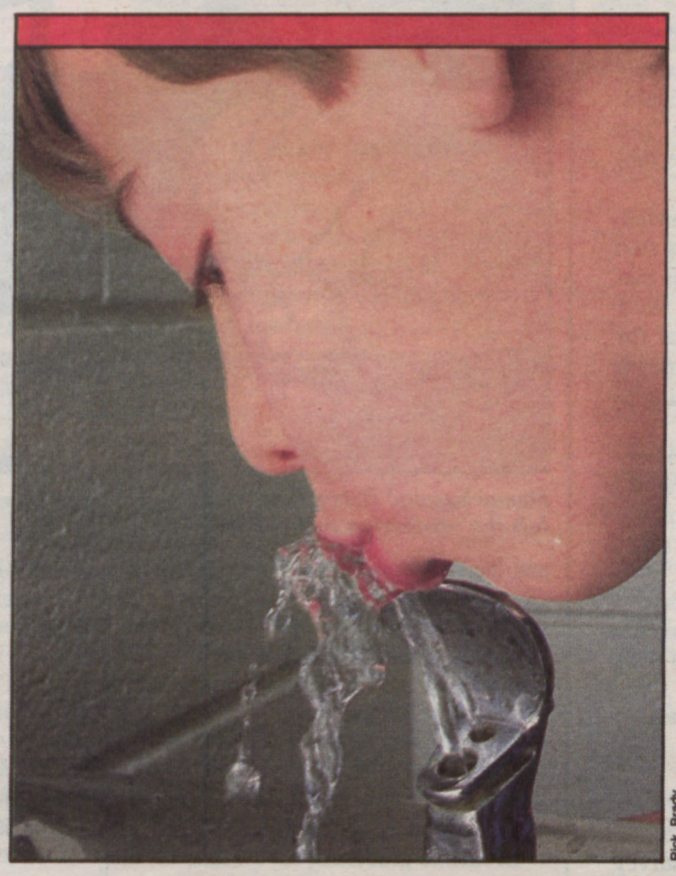
HEALTH AND SAFETY

POISON IN THE PLUMBING

School water fountains pouring out a poison to which children are particularly susceptible? Sounds like a bad horror movie.

But it's all too real. The seemingly innocent water fountain—plus school plumbing—can be a source of lead poisoning for students and school employees alike.



Rick Brady

Lead continues silently to endanger children across the country—and school drinking water may be one of its main sources.

When taken in through food, water, or air, lead can damage the brain, kidneys, nervous system, and red blood cells. It causes hypertension in middle-aged men and endangers the fetuses of pregnant women. And because children absorb lead more quickly and thoroughly than adults, it affects them most cruelly, lowering IQs, retarding growth, and causing hearing loss.

A 1987 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics calls the metal "the most serious toxicological danger to children, more threatening than asbestos and passive smoking."

It's only in the past few years that attention has focused on drinking water as a source of lead. In the 1970s, lead poisoning gained a reputation as an inner-city disease that struck children living in buildings with crumbling lead-based paint and in cities with auto exhaust-filled air. Federal laws banning lead-based paint and limiting the use of leaded gasoline were largely successful at reducing these sources of lead.

Still, the CDC reports, 9 percent of American children between 6 months and 6 years old have toxic levels of lead in their blood. And one recent study points to drinking water as the source of between 15 and 40 percent of all lead consumed.

The pattern of water use in schools makes students particularly susceptible to lead poisoning. The metal seldom occurs in water at its source; rather, it leaches from solder and pipes within a building's plumbing. In schools, water often sits in the system, moving little overnight, over weekends, or over vacations. It can become heavily contaminated.

In addition, last year the EPA found that many drinking fountains and coolers contain lead solder and even lead-lined holding tanks.

Following congressional hearings on lead in drinking water last December, the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment surveyed manufacturers of water coolers. Although the five leading manufacturers all deny currently using any lead where it could come in contact with water, only one claims *never* to have used it. Almost a million water coolers with lead may now be in use in schools and elsewhere.

Taken together, the facts that children are the primary consumers of water in school buildings, that this water is dispensed through coolers, and that water often is held in the pipes for extended periods present a clear danger.

NEA has been an active adviser on the design of a bill to be introduced in Congress later this year by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), chair of the health and environment subcommittee, and ranking minority member Edward Madigan (R-Ill.). The bill would prohibit the manufacture or sale of water coolers containing lead. It would also provide federal funds to help schools test for contamination, repair or replace water coolers, and establish lead screening programs for children.

Some states and local school districts "know they have a problem" but are still ignoring it, says EPA economic analyst Ronnie Levin. "Others have taken the high road."

Minnesota tested schools and took remedial action last year. California is about to begin testing. Connecticut has notified schools and day-care centers about the danger.

The Los Angeles Unified School District began a $677,000 testing program after a preliminary check of refrigerated fountains found that 30 percent produced elevated lead levels after the water was allowed to sit overnight (and 60 percent did so after a seven-day vacation). All refrigerated fountains have been shut off throughout the district.

In Maryland, 226 public schools that were considered at risk for lead contamination because of the corrosiveness of their water or because they had plumbing under four years old were tested. (In older plumbing, a film forms on lead components that largely prevents their leaching into the water.) Almost 28 percent were found to have dangerous lead levels.

All schools with elevated levels immediately switched to bottled water, then began remedial action ranging from regular flushing of the plumbing system to replacing parts of the system.

We live in an age when new chemical dangers are revealed almost daily. It's easy to ignore one more.

But in the words of Rep. Waxman, "The infuriating and inexcusable truth is that lead contamination of drinking water is almost entirely avoidable."

Like asbestos and other contaminants, lead in school water will probably be cleaned up—sooner or later. The health of thousands of children may depend on its being sooner. —*Karen Deans*

For More Information

A free booklet about lead contamination in the home, *Lead and Your Drinking Water*, can be obtained from the Public Information Center, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (PM-211B), 401 M St., S.W., Washington, DC 20460. A booklet on lead in school water, written with NEA assistance, will be available from EPA later this year.

News Beat

● According to a recent Louis Harris poll, conducted for *Children* magazine, 94 percent of American parents want **AIDS education** in schools. Furthermore, two out of three parents say they would keep their children in school if a classmate contracted AIDS.

● The percentage of college freshmen entering **teacher preparation programs** continues to rise slightly, a study by the American Council on Education has found. In the fall of 1987, 8.1 percent of the students entering college planned to enter elementary or secondary school teaching, up from 7.3 percent in 1986 and from the all-time low of 4.7 percent in 1982. The all-time high was recorded in 1968, when 23.5 percent declared an interest in teaching.

● American colleges have awarded more **doctorates in education** since 1968 than in any other field, according to a study just released by the U.S. Department of Education's Center for Statistics.

● Although the nation desperately needs to develop new educational strategies to meet new challenges, the amount of **education research** produced by the U.S. Education Department has taken a nose dive. A new report issued by the General Accounting Office reveals that federal funding for educational research efforts declined more than 70 percent between 1972 and 1986 although federal support for research in general increased 4 percent.

● A new call for an **Equal Rights Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution was sounded recently in Atlanta at a national symposium convened by former First Ladies Rosalynn Carter, Betty Ford, Pat Nixon, and Lady Bird Johnson. The meeting was entitled "Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective."

● **Black studies** programs are thriving on the college campuses, according to an article in the *Chicago Tribune*. In many Black studies classes, almost half the students are white. □

WELL PUT!

"The effort to limit the role of the teacher and the school to academics is one of the primary reasons America's great experiment in education—the effort to educate more than the intellectual elite and economically privileged—has been less successful than it might have been."

—James Comer, M.D., director, School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center, New Haven, Conn.

COVER STORY

The Forgotten Message: EXCELLENCE COSTS!

Five years after *A Nation At Risk*—the landmark report that sparked the education reform movement of the '80s—the professional teacher salaries so essential to quality schools are still not in sight.

Five years ago, in 1983, fourth grade teacher Betsy Tulis (cover photo), was thinking about leaving her Massachusetts classroom. A statewide tax-cut initiative had slashed school revenues, and teachers were being laid off.

"I remember thinking about how tough life had become for teachers," says Tulis, "but then I thought about the kids. I especially remember looking at the students I'd have the next year. I really felt an obligation to them." At the time, Tulis, then a 13-year teaching veteran, was making $20,090.

That same year, in April, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released what quickly became the most celebrated report on education in over a generation, *A Nation At Risk*: *The Imperative for Educational Reform.*

A Nation At Risk struck a powerful chord with the American public. We as a nation, the report argued, were in danger because our educational system had been allowed to slip into mediocrity. *A Nation At Risk* offered dozens of reform recommendations. But few solutions, the report cautioned, would come cheap.

"Excellence," *A Nation At Risk* stated flatly, "costs."

Today, five years later, "excellence costs" is the forgotten message of *A Nation At Risk*. And one key costly reform advanced by *A Nation At Risk*—the raising of teacher salaries to "professionally competitive" levels—still remains largely unrealized. Just ask Betsy Tulis.

A Nation At Risk argued forcefully that attracting and keeping quality teachers ought to be a top priority. Meeting that goal, the report noted, would require teacher salaries high enough to compare favorably with the salaries of other professions.

Five years after the release of *A Nation At Risk*, Betsy Tulis earns a salary that is hardly "professionally competitive." In this, her eighteenth year of teaching, Tulis is making $27,572.

"There have been times when I've looked into jobs in the private sector, largely because of the lure of higher salaries," says Tulis. "My husband and I have no children, but it's still absolutely essential that we both work. Friends who've left the profession for business careers are now making much more. But I always decided in the end that I wanted to stay with teaching."

The profession that Betsy Tulis is still proud to call her own now pays the average teacher $28,000, a figure that remains light years from the "professionally competitive" levels recommended by *A Nation At Risk*.

The Endicott report, issued annually by Northwestern University, lists starting salaries in several professions that require education comparable to teaching. In 1986, the most recent year for which figures are available, salaries in these professions outpaced teaching by from 19 to 67 percent.

Rosalind Bryant, an NEA member who teaches fifth grade in Colorado Springs, has seen first-hand at job fairs what these figures mean to high school students.

"When Hewlett-Packard or some company like that is talking to students about starting salaries in the mid-twenties, and students know teachers start in the mid-teens," says Bryant, "they stop thinking about teaching."

Among young people actively preparing for teaching careers, the current status of teacher salaries is cause for second thoughts. In a 1987 survey of college students in secondary methods courses by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, some 80 percent said teacher salaries are not adequate for raising a family.

Ernie Leyba, PHOTOSTAFF, Inc.

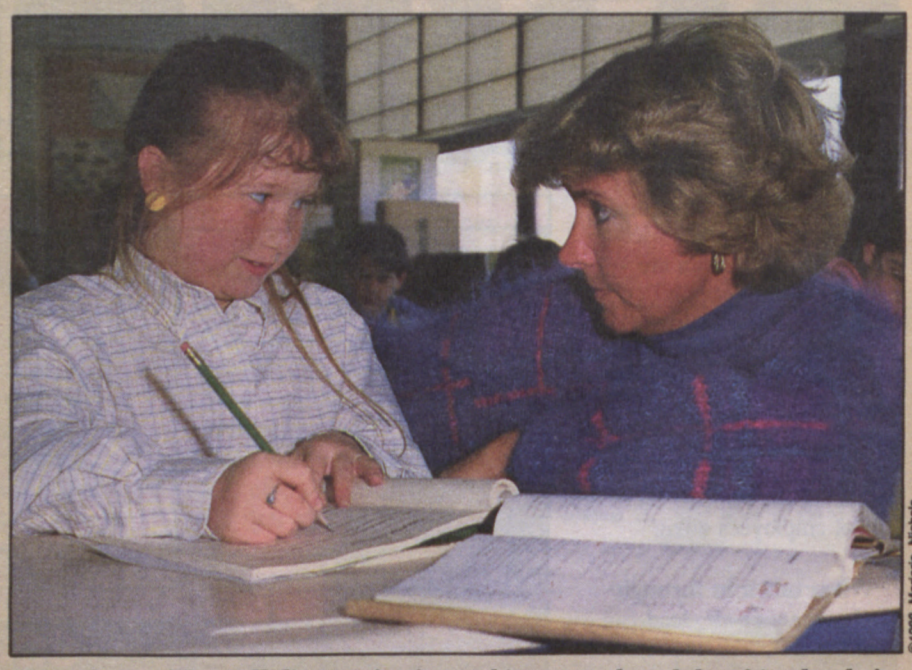
Colorado teacher Rosalind Bryant

What went wrong? Why hasn't the education reform movement of the '80s, now in its fifth year, realized the salary goals set forth by *A Nation At Risk*? The case of Texas is instructive.

In Texas, NEA members have seen public interest in education reform collide with a faltering economy—and a failure of political will.

Many education reformers hailed the Texas reform bill passed in 1984 as a model for other states to follow. Texas lawmakers put together a package of reforms that featured higher student standards and a controversial teacher competency test. For teachers who passed the test and kept their jobs, the Texas reform law also offered a career ladder plan that was designed to give all teachers additional chances to advance up the salary scale.

But not long after the Texas reform law was enacted, oil prices started sinking. As the economy turned sour and the state faced a $5.8 billion deficit, some of the rungs of the Texas career ladder started to give way. In fact, only a small number of teachers have gained significant salary hikes on the Texas career ladder.



©1986 Marjorie Nichols

Massachusetts' Betsy Tulis remains in teaching even though her friends who've left the profession make a lot more money.

In the current school year, over 80 percent of the school districts in Texas have either frozen salaries or cut their local share of salary funding.

Economic problems, says Texas State Teachers Association President Charles Beard, have "let the reform movement stall, like a sailboat when the wind's died down." Texas salaries have fallen relative to those of other states, and future funding for salary increases depends largely on the next state legislative session.

Economic troubles might help explain the failure of education reform to improve salaries in Texas. But, in general, economic conditions don't automatically determine teacher salary levels. A state's wealth, in fact, is a relatively unreliable predictor of teacher salaries. Of the 10 states (including the District of Columbia) whose residents had the highest per capita incomes in 1985, only half—Alaska, the District of Columbia, New York, California, and New Jersey—were among the top 10 in teacher salaries. Of the 10 with the lowest per capita income, only West Virginia, Arkansas, and Mississippi paid teacher salaries ranking in the bottom 10.

Clearly, forces other than economic conditions are at work. Consider New England neighbors Connecticut and New Hampshire.

New Hampshire has neither a personal income tax nor a state sales tax, and candidates for political office usually start their campaigns by pledging not to impose either of them. Ninety percent of school funding in New Hampshire is from local sources.

"When *A Nation At Risk* came out, New Hampshire ranked 46th in the country in teacher salaries," says Marilyn Monahan, president of NEA-New Hampshire. "The next year it went to 47th, then to 48th."

Yet, notes Monahan, New Hampshire now ranks about ninth in personal per capita income.

"There was a survey," says Monahan, "that found that there are over 8,000 people in New Hampshire certified to teach who aren't teaching. That should tell you something."

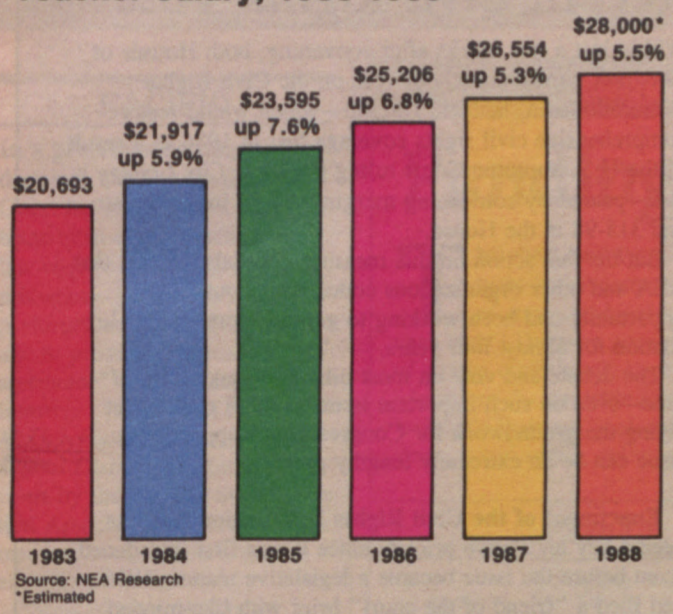
Connecticut provides a sharp contrast. Only about half of school funding is provided locally. After a three-year campaign by the Connecticut Education Association, the state legislature passed a bill in 1986 making over $300 million for teacher salaries available to local school districts.

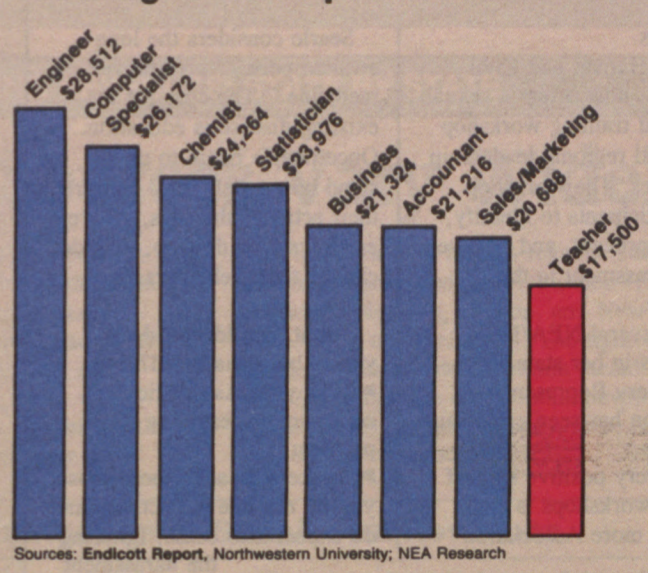
From 1986 to 1989, the average starting salary in Connecticut will have increased from $15,201 to $22,500, the average master's maximum salary from $27,986 to $39,500, and the average M.A.+30 maximum from $30,000 to $42,150.

Not surprisingly, applications for teaching positions in Connecticut are up—many come from out-of-state teachers.

Many teachers now find themselves peering at higher salaries not across state boundaries, but across county lines. Salaries in some metropolitan areas have shot considerably ahead of neighboring rural communities, far beyond any difference that might be justified by differences in the cost of living. One school district in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota pays a starting salary of $24,000 while a district 200 miles away pays $16,800. The difference between the highest and lowest maximum salaries in the state is over $21,000. Addressing this disparity is a

COVER STORY





high-priority issue for the Minnesota Education Association.

In Colorado, the average salary is about $27,000, but one third of districts don't reach this figure at any point on their salary scale. Colorado salaries have fallen victim to a general political unwillingness to recognize the cost of excellence.

Teachers in Colorado Springs had to accept increases of 1.5 percent a year for two years after new mill levies were defeated. Says fifth grade teacher Rosalind Bryant: "It can make it discouraging to be a teacher, and it certainly is forcing more teachers to take other jobs to supplement their incomes."

In nearby Denver, teachers shouted "Six percent, we won't relent" at a January rally for salary hikes that the school board had promised a year ago. After voters rejected a property tax increase in November, the board said it couldn't afford to raise salaries, maintaining that the negotiated raise had always been contingent on increased revenues. Countered Jan Erskine, president of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association: "It was never a matter of voters approving the mill levy or not. The taxpayers didn't say no to the Denver schools, they said no to an increased property tax."

"Sure, we've had some tough times," says Colorado Education Association president Gordon Heaton, "but we're not a poor state. It's unfair that officials continue to try to solve financial problems by placing more burdens on teachers."

In contrast, across the country in New Jersey, legislators have heard the call for reform—perhaps because it was shouted at them by the New Jersey Education Association. After New Jersey Governor Tom Kean casually mentioned during a 1983 speech the idea of establishing a statewide minimum salary, NJEA promptly made the idea one of its top legislative priorities. Several months later, the legislature approved a statewide minimum starting salary of $18,500.

Notes NJEA President Dennis Giordano: "Legislators thought the minimum salary was the greatest thing since sliced bread. It shows their constituents that they're buying into education reform."

NJEA is currently pressing for passage of a bill to raise the state minimum teacher salary to $22,000.

"Now we have to make sure that teachers across the salary schedule benefit by the legislature's willingness to boost education funding," says Giordano. "We're already seeing more salaries move into the $50,000 range."

Five years ago, at the time *A Nation at Risk* was released, America was saying "Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be teachers." Only 45 percent of respondents to a 1983 *Phi Delta Kappan* Poll said they would like a child of theirs to take up teaching.

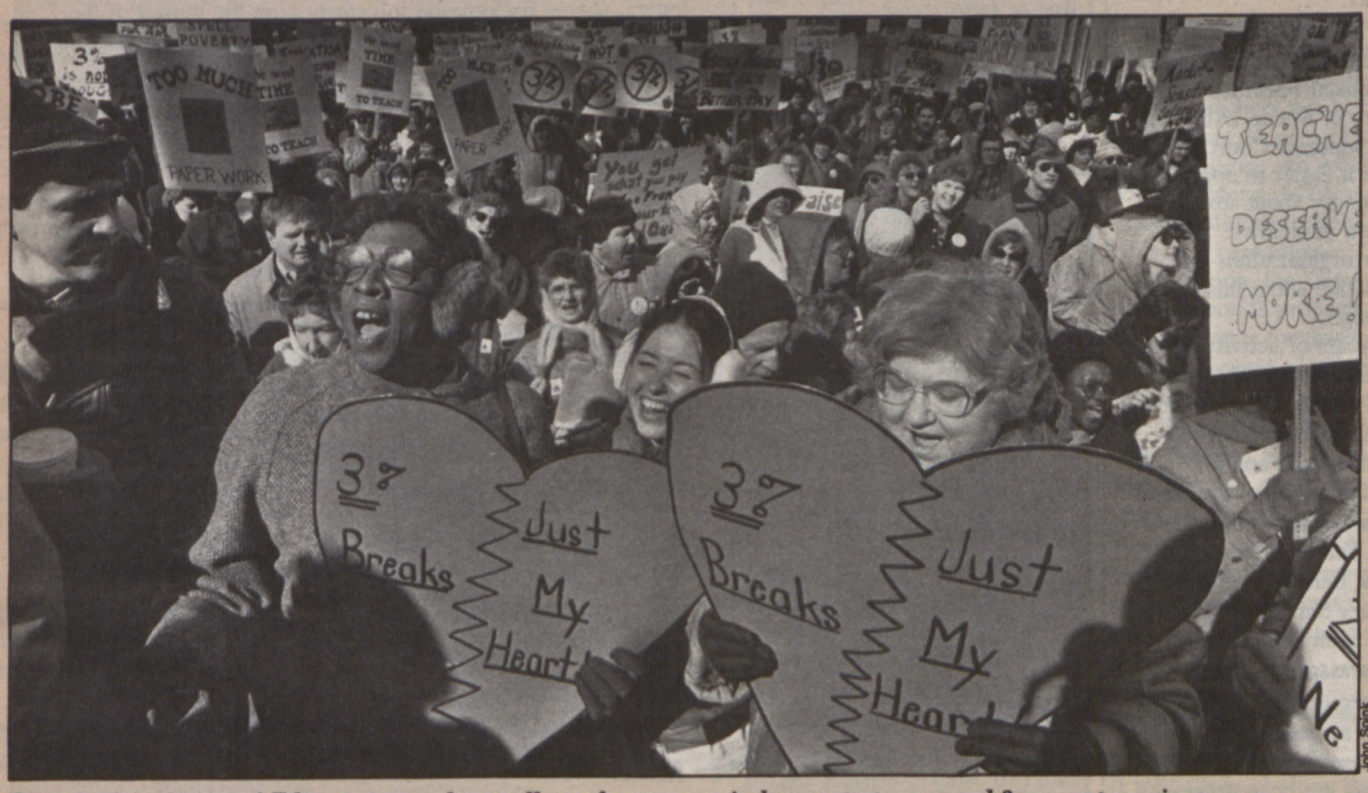
By contrast, back in 1969, 75 percent of Americans considered teaching a great career for their kids. The main reason for the decline? Low teacher salaries.

Quality education, the authors of *A Nation At Risk* understood, requires teacher salaries high enough to make teaching an attractive and competitive profession.

"One thing *A Nation At Risk* did," says NEA-New Hampshire President Marilyn Monahan, "was focus attention on education and make teachers feel that they're worth more. It made them realize that they shouldn't compromise when compromising means caving in."

Compromising away professional salary levels means compromising away the excellence in education every student in America deserves. Or, as *A Nation At Risk* put it so bluntly five years ago, "Excellence costs." That's a message the nation can't afford to forget.

—Karen Deans



Georgia Association of Educators members rally at the state capitol to protest proposed 3 percent pay increases.

NEA Leads Fight For Better Pay

NEA's ambitious nationwide effort to boost the salaries of all school employees is moving full speed ahead.

The NEA Compensation Program, launched after an initiative approved by the 1985 NEA Representative Assembly, is now helping NEA state affiliates find the most effective approach to boosting salaries in education.

"Every state faces a different salary situation," explains Compensation Project Manager John Dunlop. "From the national level, the best way NEA can help is by giving affiliates the resources they need to develop their own long-range compensation plans."

The NEA Compensation Program is currently providing two kinds of grants. Planning grants of $20,000 each have gone out to about half of NEA's state affiliates. All affiliates will have been awarded planning grant help by the end of this year.

The second grants—target grants—go to states where salary breakthroughs can be expected to have the biggest "spillover" effect on other states. California is one of the states that has received target grant help.

"When salaries go up here in California, California will be raiding other states for teachers," notes Dick Odgers of the California Teachers Association. "Then those states will have to offer their teachers something to retain them."

Twelve states have so far received target grants that range from $20,000 to $80,000. California, New Jersey, Tennessee, Iowa, Maryland, and Idaho received special grants last year. Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Indiana, and Arizona received them early this year.

Good salary planning demands an accurate analysis of a state's political, social, and economic environment. Most NEA state affiliates will be conducting public opinion polling and research as part of their compensation strategy. Each affiliate will be developing individualized state plans based on this research.

In California, the state plan is emphasizing support for two school funding initiatives.

Idaho is working to develop plans for coordinated bargaining. New Jersey is using its NEA grant in part to support a bill setting a minimum salary for school support staff.

Says New Jersey field services coordinator Jack Bertolino: "We're big on compensation anyway, but the NEA grant compelled us to think about what we can do in an organized fashion. NEA provided the incentive and set the parameters, then let us go at it ourselves." *—K.D.*

HUMAN RIGHTS

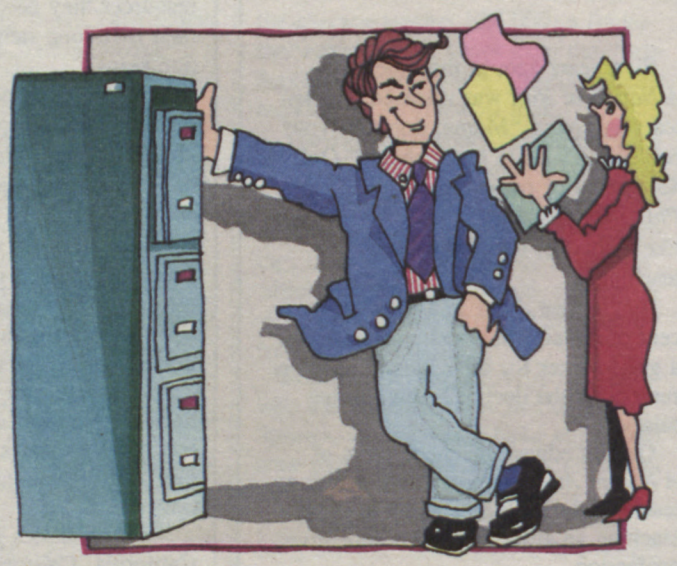
Confronting Sexual Harassment

A hand on a shoulder or knee or rear. Repeated requests for dinner dates or weekend getaways. Comments about one's appearance or dress.

Are these examples of sexual harassment? Are they illegal?

They can be. According to a 1986 Supreme Court decision, discriminatory treatment that leads to a "hostile or abusive work environment" is sexual harassment and violates Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bars sex discrimination. The court also held that employers may be held legally liable for sexual harassment committed by one of their employees—even if the employers are not informed of the harassment.

That liability creates a vulnerability for school districts and universities that have done little to prevent sexual harassment or deal with harassment complaints.



NEA and its state and local affiliates are taking the initiative—not only educating members about how to deal with sexual harassment, but approaching school administrators with proposed sexual harassment policies and procedures.

NEA's Human and Civil Rights unit now offers a sexual harassment training workshop at state and regional leadership conferences. The workshop trains participants to identify, confront, prevent, and resolve sexual harassment in the workplace.

After several NEA/HCR workshops in her state, Montana UniServ Representative Pat Nielson has seen encouraging results.

"One very positive spinoff from the workshops is that more and more Association members are encouraging their districts to put a sexual harassment policy on the books, for their own protection and because it's the right thing to do," Nielson says.

Motivated by a series of sexual harassment complaints in the last few years, three NEA affiliates—representing faculty, professional, and clerical staff—on the seven campuses of the University of Maine—are working together to establish systemwide guidelines to deal with sexual harassment complaints.

James Roberts, political science professor and president of the Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM), says the Supreme Court's ruling made it easier to approach the University about sexual harassment guidelines. "All employer organizations are very sensitive about this now," Roberts says.

After years of activity on the issue, the Education Association of Natick, Mass., is now attempting to negotiate both contract language and a systemwide policy to deal with sexual harassment concerns.

Jackie Searle, a first grade teacher at Bennett Hemenway Elementary School in Natick, has long been an activist on sexual harassment issues. "As we've been discussing harassment and as people's awareness has increased, the number of complaints has been decreasing," Searle says.

Searle considers the long-awaited policy "preventive medicine." The cure for the existing disease is education. Once people begin to understand how others may interpret their actions, she says, "there are folks who do stop, who do change their behaviors."

What should you do if you're being harassed?

► Ask your Association's assistance in resolving the problem.

► Make it clear to the harasser you do not like the activity and do expect it to cease. Ignoring the harassment will only encourage the harasser and may hurt your case in the long run.

► Keep a written record of all harassing activities.

► Notify your colleagues of the problem so they can observe and, if necessary, corroborate your claims.

► Don't blame yourself. Don't be too embarrassed to talk to others about the problem and seek help.

► Don't resign.

For more information about sexual harassment, contact Barbara Stein or Olivia Aguilar, NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, (202) 822-7700.

—Stefanie Weiss, NEA Human and Civil Rights

Defining the Problem

Confused about exactly what constitutes sexual harassment? In 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued guidelines to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act on sexual harassment. These guidelines include a very specific legal definition of sexual harassment:

"Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when—

- "submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- "submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- "such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

Test Your Knowledge

Are the following statements true or false?

1. To be a violation of the law, sexual harassment must involve a "tangible" damage, such as being fired, losing money, or being passed over for a promotion.
2. An employer who is unaware of sexual harassment in the workplace can still be liable for that harassment.
3. Women can be guilty of sexual harassment.
4. Ignoring harassing behavior generally is an effective means of discouraging it.
5. The courts are still debating whether sexual harassment constitutes a violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.
6. Those who sexually harass generally have a pattern of harassment, and do not single out one isolated victim.

Answers: 1) False 2) True 3) True 4) False 5) False 6) True.

WASHINGTON WATCH

Lengthy Struggle Precedes Recent Civil Rights Vote

Within just a few weeks after convening, both Houses of Congress moved quickly to vote on the Civil Rights Restoration Act, S. 557. The bill—which would restore comprehensive civil rights coverage lost in 1984 as a result of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Grove City College v. Bell*—passed by convincing margins, 75-14 in the Senate and 315-98 in the House.

But the fast action on this measure conceals the fact that NEA and other organizations concerned about equal opportunity had been working to gain support for this legislation for almost four years.

The debate and vote on most bills don't take a lot of time—even on such important issues as civil rights. But laying the groundwork for Congressional support of an issue can be an extremely lengthy process.

Enactment of the Civil Rights Restoration Act has been a key legislative priority since it was first introduced. Even before the issue became a legislative matter, NEA had filed a "friend of the court" brief with like-minded organizations in the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Initially the issue revolved around sex discrimination at the university level: could a postsecondary institution discriminate against women, in violation of a federal statute—Title IX of the Higher Education Act—even though it received federal funds in the form of federal student aid? The courts ruled that the federal protection against discrimination extended only to the specific program or activity that received federal funds.

Almost immediately, the Reagan Administration's Justice Department began applying that interpretation to other federal nondiscrimination statutes prohibiting discrimination based on race and national origin, handicap, and age. Moreover, that narrow interpretation affected, not just schools, colleges, and universities, but a broad range of institutions.

"Anyone who dips a hand in the federal till should not mind if a little democracy sticks to the fingers."
—Rep. Augustus "Gus" Hawkins (D.-Calif.)
cosponsor, Civil Rights Restoration Act

Joe Di Dio

Like all legislative issues that NEA works for, the campaign to restore a broad interpretation to federal statutes outlawing discrimination took place on two fronts—on Capitol Hill and with individual members of Congress through NEA members.

NEA testified, met with members of Congress, wrote letters, shared background information on the impact of the *Grove City* ruling, and employed other legislative strategies to press individual senators and representatives to cosponsor and support the measure. At the same time, NEA provided information to Association members through publications and at meetings so that they could speak knowledgeably about the issue with their representatives, their colleagues, and the public at large.

Although there were a variety of technical and clarifying changes since the bill was first introduced in the 99th Congress, the bill as passed in March would establish greater federal protection against discrimination.

Eventually more and more lawmakers came to share the view of one of the Civil Rights Restoration Act's chief cosponsors, Rep. Augustus "Gus" Hawkins (D.-Calif.), who said, "Anyone who dips a hand in the federal till should not mind if a little democracy sticks to the fingers."

After advocates spent almost four years of educating people about the issue, the legislation "graduated." By the time Congress voted on S. 557, it had 59 cosponsors in the Senate and 150 cosponsors in the House.

Actually, four years is not an unusually long time to build support for legislative action. Consider the Equal Rights Amendment, which was first drafted around 1920 and remains in a state of suspended animation in the 100th Congress as S.J.Res. 1 in the Senate and H.J.Res. 1 in the House.

—Michael Pons, NEA Government Relations

State Side

PACIFIC

In a precedent-setting decision, the Nevada Supreme Court has ruled that school districts must comply with a state law requiring them to inform probationary teachers if their performance is unsatisfactory and to provide "reasonable assistance" to help them improve. The case of *Pamela McCrackin vs. Elko County School District* was brought to court by the Nevada State Education Association for Association member McCrackin, a special education teacher.

Since 1979, NSEA has wanted to protect probationary teachers by securing for them early notice of serious problems through a letter of admonition. NSEA leaders praised the *McCrackin* ruling, calling it a "milestone in making the evaluation process a meaningful tool for improving the quality of education." McCrackin received $31,000 as a cash settlement. After the trial, the school district offered her reinstatement.

MID-ATLANTIC

At last—good news for educators in West Virginia!

In a ruling last February, the State Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the West Virginia Education Association, whose suit against the governor and the legislature charged that the 1987-88 state budget was unconstitutional. WVEA argued that by spending $13.4 million less than the amount required by the school aid formula, the budget violated the state constitution's call for "a thorough and efficient schooling for every child."

The court gave the state 60 days to correct the school aid formula by $26 million.

WVEA president Tom Vogel says, "The decision sends a very strong message to legislators that they can't abitrarily cut education like they do other state agencies."

SOUTHEAST

The fight was long and hard, the victory decisive. At the beginning of March an out-of-court settlement concerning the state's Teacher Certification Test (TCT) concluded the Georgia Association of Educators' federal suit against the state and its board, department, and superintendent of education.

The state will pay the settlement costs, which are expected to run up to $3 million, mostly to help those teachers who lost their jobs because they failed the TCT. Some 700 teachers who took the TCT for initial certification, failed it more than twice, taught with provisional certificates, and lost their jobs because of failing the test will be eligible for $2,000 study grants. Study grants of $6,000 will go to some 350 experienced teachers whose certificates expired August 31, 1987—and were not renewed because they'd failed the test—and who therefore lost their jobs.

The agreement also specifies that courses on taking the TCT, as well as the test itself, will be given a specified number of times at specified places between now and August 31.

A further advance is the granting of limited certificates for teaching physics and biology, so that teachers of one subject don't lose their jobs for failing the test in the other. A similar arrangement will separate teachers of learning-disabled students from those of students with behavioral disorders. Distinctions within vocational education also are being considered.

"GAE will stand firm," emphasizes GAE President Faye Fox. "If we believe something needs to be set right, we'll spend the time, money, and effort to do that, despite controversy and despite any odds."

NORTHEAST

The Massachusetts Teachers Association has just filed a bill to create an autonomous teacher certification board with a majority of classroom teachers. The proposed 15-person board would include eight teachers, one superintendent, one school committee member, one administrator, three teacher educators, and one representative of the public. The governor would select board members from among candidates recommended by professional organizations.

Simultaneously, the Massachusetts Department of Education has filed a bill proposing a new teacher preparation and certification program requiring a greater liberal arts concentration as well as some education and clinical work. The bill includes the first proposal for a two-tiered certification procedure. New teachers would get a provisional certificate, becoming eligible for permanent certification if they earned a master's degree within five years. Provisional teachers would work with a mentor-teacher and a higher education faculty member. Mentor-teachers would be released from 20 percent of their responsibilities and receive a $5,000 stipend. MTA wants these conditions to be subject to collective bargaining.

In addition, the Department of Education is proposing two new programs for teachers working toward permanent certification. One would make part-time students eligible for state financial aid. The other would extend a loan forgiveness program, the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Fund, to cover graduate students preparing for permanent certification. Discussions continue on all issues.

WEST

It may seem obvious that school boards should follow their own policies, but Texas's Woodsboro Independent School District didn't do so in a career ladder case until the state education commissioner compelled it to. In 1984-85, the first year of Texas's state-mandated career ladder program, the Woodsboro district had 21 teachers who were qualified for Level II of the new ladder, but only 11 slots to give them.

Had the district used its own written criteria to shorten the list, four NEA/TSTA members would have gone to Level II.

But the Woodsboro board didn't follow its own policy, and none of the four reached Level II. TSTA filed a grievance on their behalf, but the board refused to hear their case. An appeal to a hearing officer with the state department of education also failed.

Finally, the case went to state education commissioner William Kirby, who ruled that the Woodsboro policy was valid since it did not violate state policy, so the district had erred in not following it.

MIDWEST

North Dakota Governor George Sinner's 1986 Conference on Public Education brought together educators from throughout the state to improve the public schools.

The steering committee for Sinner's conference has become the state's new Education Advancement Task Force, consisting of representatives from the North Dakota Education Association, the school boards' and administrators' organizations, the Economic Commission, the state Job Service, the Department of Vocational Education, and the Department of Public Instruction.

"The efforts of this Task Force are aimed at achieving massive reform in public education," says NDEA President Peg Portscheller.

Plans are to identify critical issues facing education and to formulate a design to bring about needed changes. Members of the Task Force are holding school district and town meetings throughout the state to promote citizen participation.

"The summation of all this work," Portscheller adds, "will be one all-encompassing legislative action plan for education—including such topics as changes in funding, curriculum requirements, and use of technology."

"This is the first time in the history of the state that this kind of initiative—with a vision of the future—has been undertaken," notes Superintendent of Public Instruction Wayne Sanstead.

RAISING REVENUES: STATE BY STATE

Funding Sources Vary Widely

The chart below reflects the tax structures and revenue-raising preferences of state and local governments in each state. The way governments raise funds of course directly affects the funding of education. As the table shows, states vary widely in their tax preferences. Washington State, for example, relies on property and sales taxes for over half its revenue and does not tax personal income. Five states—Alaska, Delaware, Montana, Oregon, and New Hampshire—don't tax retail sales. The figures under the "other revenue" column include other taxes (such as those on alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and motor vehicles), fees, fines, and state lottery proceeds.

Percent Distribution of State/Local Revenues

State	Property Tax	Income Tax	Sales Tax	Other Revenues
Alabama	7.3	15.1	18.6	59.0
Alaska	9.0	3.3	0.8	86.8
Arizona	18.3	12.7	25.5	43.5
Arkansas	12.5	18.4	23.3	45.9
California	18.5	24.0	20.2	37.3
Colorado	22.9	14.4	19.9	42.7
Connecticut	30.4	10.6	20.9	38.1
Delaware	7.8	28.5	0.0	63.7
District of Columbia	24.1	27.8	17.6	30.6
Florida	21.3	2.3	23.2	53.2
Georgia	16.4	19.9	18.5	45.2
Hawaii	13.3	20.6	29.5	36.6
Idaho	18.8	20.1	15.9	45.1
Illinois	27.0	14.7	18.8	39.4
Indiana	22.3	16.6	22.7	38.4
Iowa	27.5	17.9	13.9	40.7
Kansas	24.5	15.3	13.4	46.9
Kentucky	12.0	21.1	14.5	52.4
Louisiana	8.8	9.1	24.5	57.6
Maine	27.5	17.6	17.7	37.2
Maryland	18.9	30.0	11.6	39.5
Massachusetts	26.3	32.0	11.5	30.2
Michigan	27.8	23.7	12.6	35.9
Minnesota	19.1	23.9	12.4	44.6
Mississippi	14.7	9.8	24.9	50.7
Missouri	15.5	17.7	24.1	42.7
Montana	29.7	13.9	0.0	56.5
Nebraska	28.2	11.9	12.9	47.0
Nevada	14.1	0.0	22.1	63.8
New Hampshire	45.0	7.8	0.0	47.2
New Jersey	30.8	16.3	12.9	40.0
New Mexico	6.3	4.3	20.9	68.4
New York	23.0	29.1	15.0	32.9
North Carolina	15.6	25.5	16.2	42.7
North Dakota	15.0	10.4	12.2	62.4
Ohio	20.1	22.0	15.8	42.2
Oklahoma	11.9	13.3	17.3	57.5
Oregon	28.8	25.4	0.0	45.8
Pennsylvania	19.7	22.4	13.7	44.2
Rhode Island	27.9	17.3	13.4	41.4
South Carolina	15.5	20.3	19.6	44.6
South Dakota	27.8	1.5	19.7	51.5
Tennessee	15.1	4.7	32.8	47.5
Texas	24.8	0.0	16.8	58.3
Utah	16.8	14.3	20.0	48.8
Vermont	27.9	17.7	8.6	45.8
Virginia	20.5	21.9	12.2	45.4
Washington	20.2	0.0	33.8	46.0
West Virginia	12.2	19.1	25.2	43.5
Wisconsin	26.5	23.7	14.2	35.6
Wyoming	25.3	0.0	9.9	64.8
United States	21.1	18.2	17.1	43.6

Computations based on 1985 figures supplied by the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1987.

Local Look

MISSOURI

When Springfield custodial, maintenance, and supply employees were considering union representation back in 1986, the school board encouraged them to vote for "no representative." But 65 percent said "Yes" to representation by S-ESP, a Missouri NEA affiliate, and it became the employees' exclusive bargaining representative.

Since that election, the work environment has improved for S-ESP's more than 200 constituents. Their relationship with their employer has completely turned around.

"We're recognizing problems and taking steps to alleviate them," says S-ESP President-elect Bob Foster, citing two resolved safety issues. Custodians were concerned because, in some buildings, a lone sweeper was assigned to the night shift. S-ESP, working with the district, devised a schedule that put a pair of sweepers in each building.

S-ESP also pointed out that many ladders used in the district were extremely old and unsafe. District officials agreed to spend $45,000 to purchase new ladders.

"We want to commend the district administration for working with us," says S-ESP President Ron Yancey. "There's a new commitment to safety throughout the school system."

OREGON

The tax base for the Centennial public schools, near Portland, has not increased since 1980. Gradually shriveling for lack of operating funds, the school district shortened the school year, reduced staff, and closed an elementary school.

When these actions didn't save enough money, the district closed its schools altogether for a week in February. All staff, including 295 teachers, along with the more than 4,800 students, missed five full class days. Teachers lost $600 to $800 in wages. Centennial Education Association president Jim Kennedy says, "Oregon's safety net didn't catch us. Centennial slipped through."

Since the closure, CEA has launched a multi-faceted campaign to encourage citizens to vote this May in favor of raising their local tax base. The Association has taken out ads in the local newspaper, and individual members have sent home letters to parents, held meetings in their homes with neighbors, and gone door-to-door to discuss school support. They're publicizing the fact that two neighboring school districts pay much higher salaries than Centennial, and they're warning voters that defeating the levy hike could cause the district to lose some of its teachers.

To partially offset the pay losses, the Oregon Education Association gave each Centennial teacher a $100 bill. The money came from the OEA Relief Fund for teacher crises.

NEW YORK

"It was a case of taxation without representation," reports Bernice Keith, a teacher's aide and leader in the move to switch from another union and create a new NEA ESP unit in Buffalo. The district's 1,000 or so teacher aides had shared a union with sanitation workers, parks department employees, and other local workers. Instead of services, they'd been getting abuse as "dumb broads." The aides decided to create an alternative union that represented education employees exclusively.

"Teacher's aides want to set an agenda to upgrade their work," explains Keith. "We want to let people know that we are proud of our jobs and that we can handle our own concerns. We want to make our union an organization in which everyone has a voice."

The next task for Keith and her colleagues is to set up bylaws and sign up members. Spread out over more than 80 schools throughout Buffalo, the aides are looking forward to networking with other NEA ESP groups around the country.

MARYLAND

The money was there—but not for teachers. That's what the 3,600 members of the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County (TAAAC) discovered after their 1987 negotiations.

With a $41 million surplus on hand, the county executive and council decided that the 8 percent raise TAAAC had agreed upon was too much—6 percent would do. And they had the authority to make the change.

TAAAC members started "working to the rule," set up informational picketing, attended council meetings, and contacted local elected officials and community members to build support.

The result: TAAAC has now negotiated a new three-year contract providing for a 9 percent raise each year—and the county executive and council has made a public commitment to fund the agreement.

"We're where we are today because our members persevered," sums up TAAAC President Susie Jablinske.

D.C. AREA

Five local Associations representing some 20,000 teachers in the Washington, D. C., suburbs have joined forces across state lines to form the Metropolitan Committee for Excellent Schools.

The committee—which covers Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland and the city of Alexandria and Arlington and Fairfax counties in Virginia—will revitalize coalitions in local communities on issues of common concern, such as the area's increasingly diverse student body.

ALABAMA

Many students need help outside the school day—and not just with homework. That's why members of five Alabama urban local Associations take time after regular school hours to hold Opportunity Schools for any students who sign up and get parental permission. The Opportunity School is held in one school in each city, for the students of that school.

Besides help with assignments, the daily one-hour program offers work on reading, writing, math, and verbal skills. In addition, specialists present topics like study habits or self-image. Students get a good place to study and the materials they need to do their work, along with help at the wave of a hand. The students, many of them latchkey children, also spend that first hour after school in a safe place. In return, they commit themselves for the whole 16 weeks of the program. It's a popular deal: each site draws between 125 and 200 students.

Founded in Montgomery in 1984, the program, with funding from NEA and the Alabama Education Association, has spread to Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile, and Jefferson County. All principals, teachers, and support staff involved are Association members, who get only a small monetary payment for their work.

HELP FOR KIDS IN NEED

Phoenix ESP Fund Clothing Store

Don Stevenson

From left: Phoenix Classified Employees Association leaders Mary Kouts, Jo Owen, Herman Eaton, and Angie Arvizu; center, student volunteer Tyrell Neal.

Clothes may not make the person, but not having clothes can certainly unmake the student—a principle proven true once again in Arizona's Phoenix Union High School District. Last year, a district staff member phoning the home of two absentee brothers discovered that not only did the boys live alone, they also shared one set of clothing. Which meant they couldn't be in school at the same time.

Members of the PUHSD Classified Employees Association immediately realized there were likely to be other students in a similar fix and set out to help them.

Explains CEA president Mary Kouts: "We decided to raise enough money to stock a small clothing 'store' where kids in need could come and outfit themselves."

Last fall classified employees put on a fair. "We had 40 booths, sponsored by student clubs and by groups of parents, classified staff, and teachers," says Kouts. The fair netted almost $1,500. Also, Kouts reports, the utility Arizona Public Service donated some $2,000 worth of new clothes and many individuals contributed hand-me-downs.

Then CEA member Herman Eaton, plant manager at PUHSD's South Mountain High School, found a room on his campus where the clothing could be displayed. "We've found 15 different kids who weren't going to school because they lacked clothes," Kouts notes. "Now they can go."

The clothing store was a logical extension of the home-telephoning project, one of CEA's several antidropout efforts. "The district was using a recorded message to check on absentees," Kouts explains, "but we knew that real human contact would be more effective. We volunteered to make the calls on our lunch hours and after school." The CEA approach was proven right, and this year much of the phoning is being done by PUHSD staff as part of their regular duties.

TEACHERS...AS GRANT-GIVERS

DeeAnn Hall

Alice Omann (left), Operation Rescue coordinator in Eugene, Oreg., looks on as a mother and her two children take advantage of Library Night.

LOOK OUT, Ford Foundation, HERE COMES NFIE!

NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education wants to be one of the biggest grant-givers in K-12 education.

Foundations are a fixture on the modern American scene. Foundations regularly grant millions of dollars to projects and programs that help Americans solve problems in every area of life—including education.

Now there's a new player on the foundation block, NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), about to be infused—over five years' time—with $9 million of capital from the NEA.

NFIE-funded programs have always been unique because they've given teachers money to do projects the teachers themselves have designed. Even now, as its capital-building program gets under way, NFIE is making grants with money from contributions by NEA, state and local Associations (see box below), individual members, and corporations, including California Casualty, Chevron, Aetna, Bristol-Myers, and Prudential. The projects supported by these grants—totalling some $230,000 this year—are forerunners of the many more programs NFIE will fund in the years ahead.

NFIE's newest program is the Christa McAuliffe Institute for Educational Pioneering. The Institute wants to bring together imaginative, risk-taking teachers—people like Christa McAuliffe—who can take the lead in revitalizing education in their schools.

In January of this year, a special NFIE committee selected the first five Christa McAuliffe Educators (pictured below) from among more than 100 candidates. All are leaders in applying technology to education, the theme of this year's Institute. They'll work this summer with the 20 McAuliffe Fellows—the latter chosen for their designs of instructional projects that will make substantial use of technology.

"Each team of Fellows knows what it wants to accomplish," says Ron Fortunato, one of the five. "Our job will to be to make the technology end of it transparent—for them and their colleagues at home."

This school year also finds NFIE at the halfway point in another major effort, Operation Rescue. Since 1986 NFIE has had from NEA $1.7 million—$1 million to start the NFIE endowment and $700,000 to spend on innovative programs designed by local Associations to reduce the school dropout rate. Now after two years—and 26 different projects selected from nearly 400 applications—Phase One has been completed, and some generalizations can be made.

One effect of Operation Rescue's teacher-designed and teacher-funded programs is to change the relationship local Associations have with their districts and the rest of the community.

In Eugene, Oreg., for example, the Operation Rescue grant has put the Eugene Education Association into a partnership role with the school district and made it a player in local health and welfare programs. EEA's Operation Rescue grant supports an early intervention program for kindergartners and first graders who already show signs of future school failure.

A year ago EEA president Nancy English wrote the Operation Rescue proposal jointly with the Eugene assistant superintendent of schools (at a time when he had to cross EEA's picket line so the application could meet NFIE's deadline!). English observes: "The Association can't help but feel more equal to the district when we bring $19,000 to a project, the same amount as the district does."

EEA's project tries to "bond" the parents in a partnership with the school—through programs, such as Library Night, that involve them with their children's activities. This, too, has had the effect of expanding teachers'—and EEA's—horizons.

But the real gratification for Operation Rescue's teacher-participants doesn't come primarily from seeing the Association become more visible. What gratifies Operation Rescue teachers is watching the children in their programs start thinking better of themselves. Improving self-esteem of children—sometimes of parents as well—seems an almost universal goal of Operation Rescue projects.

NFIE also funds smaller programs— the Hilda Maehling Fellowships for professional development and the William G. Carr Grant Program for international understanding and world peace. The hope is that with stable funding NFIE will always be there when Association members want to try out new ways of exerting influence on their communities, their schools, and their students.

—Nancy R. Needham

To Give, NFIE First Has To Receive

The 1987 NEA Representative Assembly voted to give the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) $1.8 million each year for the next five to endow a permanent fund. NFIE officials expect some $1.6 million of every $1.8 million contribution to go into the endowment rather than to be spent on NFIE's operating programs.

"The trick of an endowment fund," explains Terry Herndon, chair of NFIE's board of directors, "is to put money in and not take any out until you accumulate enough to live off the interest and dividends without 'invading' the principal."

That means NFIE wants the endowment to keep growing until it can produce close to $1 million in earnings every year to award directly to the men and women who work in America's schools. Projections are that this will be possible by 1993-94, when the endowment will have grown to $13 or $14 million.

NFIE needs contributions now so it can pay each year for current programs—Operation Rescue, the McAuliffe Institute, and the Hilda Maehling and William G. Carr awards.

Individual Association members as well as local and state Associations can help fund NFIE operations. The McAuliffe Fund has already received substantial contributions from the state Associations in Massachusetts and Alabama, from local Associations in Anne Arundel County, Md., and Multnomah S.D. #1, Oreg., and from the North Ranch Elementary School in the Paradise Valley, Ariz., district.

Contributions from individuals are tax deductible. Checks written to "NFIE" will be applied to whichever program the 15-member NFIE board thinks needs the money. Or, donors can make their check out to a particular program—Operation Rescue, say, or the Christa McAuliffe American Education Fund—and the contribution will be restricted to that program. NFIE is located at NEA Center, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

—N.R.N.

The First Five McAuliffe Educators

Lyn Chan
Sixth grade science, Skyline Elementary School, Daly City, Calif.

Ron Fortunato
Coordinator, NORSTAR Student Research Institute, Norfolk (Va.) Public Schools

Jeff Holte
Sixth grade science, Central Middle School, Eden Prairie, Minn.

Gail Morse
Science, J.M. Alexander Junior High School, Huntersville, N.C.

Alan November
Information and Science Department, Wellesley (Mass.) Middle School

IN THE CLASSROOM

Rick Brady

IS THERE A GIFTED UNDERACHIEVER

Gifted underachiever? To many people, it sounds like a contradiction in terms.

But increasingly, classroom teachers and education researchers are focusing attention on this long unrecognized group of students whose classroom performance doesn't measure up to their ability and intelligence.

Traditionally, teachers have tended to identify and assist only a portion of the intellectually gifted population—the high achievers described by Joseph Renzulli of the University of Connecticut. Yet many truly gifted students are *not* hard workers who are enthusiastic about learning. More than half of all highly gifted students are discipline problems. Identification is crucial because they require particular teaching strategies.

One Association member who's strategized ways of helping gifted underachievers is Maureen Canning, who teaches students in a mixed second and third grade class at Garfield Elementary School in Lakewood, Ohio.

Last year her class included 8-year-old Jason, who hardly ever turned in any written work.

"Talking with Jason one-on-one was great," Canning recalls. "He showed keen interest when he could choose his assignment. But generally he was passive. At home his mother took care of most of his responsibilities—she didn't even let him walk to school."

It wasn't until Canning started a teaching unit on "heroes" that Jason came alive in class. The students interviewed paramedics, a Black man who had been denied housing, an adult with spina bifida—and wrote to several accomplished adults around the country, including the creator of Cabbage Patch Kids and a professional ballerina.

Canning's goal was to let students see for themselves that heroes had to work hard to overcome problems on the way to success. She wanted her gifted students to realize that they're accountable for their actions, but that "less than perfect is more than acceptable."

She was careful to encourage, rather than pressure, the students—especially Jason. Canning wanted all her students to understand that "you can follow the footsteps of others, but you have to fill your own shoes."

Most gifted underachievers have a hard time filling their own shoes. Despite high innate intelligence, they're usually insecure, with low self-confidence and less perseverance than other students. Paradoxically, the students with the highest intelligence often suffer from the lowest self-image and the most severe emotional and behavioral problems.

Most teachers have seen the two most common manifestations of the problems of underachieving gifted students: the class clown and the bully. It's much harder to identify those gifted underachievers who are shy and passively comply by getting merely passing grades when they could be academically outstanding. When teachers can identify gifted underachievers in the early grades, it's possible to completely reverse students' negative behavior and disappointing accomplishments. By fourth grade, attitudes and behavior patterns are well established. So if students don't participate in an appropriate classroom environment by that time, their problems will only become worse. "Prevention at an early age is much easier and much more successful than remediation," says Joanne Rand Whitmore, a Kent State University professor who has worked with and studied gifted underachievers.

Whitmore created and taught a pioneering elementary school program for severe underachievers at the Collins Elementary School in Cupertino, Calif.

She has categorized gifted underachievers based on the type and cause of their problems:

► *Motivational problems* (the child's personal needs conflict with the school program).

► *Lack of nurturing environment* and exposure to experiences that promote higher thinking skills.

► *Peer, community, or family values conflict* with the school's standards of achievement. (Often bright teenage females deliberately underachieve because they fear they won't be popular if they appear smart.

► *Academic skill problems* in writing, reading, or math, especially for unidentified gifted students whose first language is not English.

► *Chronic poor health or developmental delays*, such as hyperactivity or general immaturity.

► *Physical handicaps or learning disabilities*, mild to severe.

Linda Silverman, a private psychologist in Denver, Colo. who has assessed over 1,300 gifted children, says that "the largest group of gifted underachievers are students who have academic problems in 'basic skills' areas." When she administers a Structure of the Intellect test, she finds that certain students cannot process information that they hear. "They're wonderful on visual or spatial tasks, but disabled on auditory tasks. Many of these kids, it turns out, had chronic ear infections when they were younger."

Hoping to address the special needs of learning disabled/gifted and talented students, educators in Montgomery County, Md., developed a month-long summer school program for students with high IQs whose dyslexia causes them to read two or three years below grade level, or who have fine motor coordination difficulties, causing them severe writing problems.

Last year Association member Mary Bromwell, a special education teacher at Wyngate Elementary School, led one of the four-week "Creative Communications" summer classes, where fourth through eighth graders learned keyboarding and word processing skills by using Fredwriter public domain software. "Students set up and decorated their own private offices," Bromwell explains. "Each office had its own sign and rules—written, of course, on the computer."

Bromwell concentrated on teaching her students self-evaluation and self-monitoring. Using individual checklists on a daily basis, the students evaluated their time management, office organization, and overall project development. They wrote papers about famous inventors and created weekly projects, including their own inventions from scrap materials. "The kids loved the program," says Bromwell, "despite the fact that it took up much of their vacation." Administrators found it so successful that now Bromwell is starting a full-time fourth and fifth grade learning disabled-gifted class during the regular school year.

Rick Brady

IN YOU

Gifted underachieving students are easy to miss. Sometimes they're discovered when they perform exceptionally well on standardized IQ tests such as the *Stanford Binet* or the *WISC-R* or on achievement tests. Unfortunately many students, despite their high intelligence, don't do well on these tests. In fact, it's estimated that half of the nation's identified gifted population is *not* identified by such tests.

The reasons vary. Gifted students from minority or culturally different populations often have difficulties because some tests contain cultural or linguistic biases. Gifted students who are developmentally delayed or who have learning disabilities may be unable to demonstrate their abilities through standardized tests. For some, the nature of the testing process is a source of conflict and stress.

So alert teachers use other methods to find evidence of exceptional learning

IN THE CLASSROOM

potential. Parent questionnaires or interviews often provide leads by identifying out-of-school behaviors and interests that indicate a child may be gifted.

In Ohio, peer groups of third to sixth graders have been extremely accurate in identifying academically gifted learners of their own age. Sometimes teachers request testing if a student is outstanding in one particular subject but works poorly in others. Counselors and teachers have used creativity tests such as the *Raven Progressive Matrices* with great success, especially with minority or bilingual students.

have an excuse for not measuring up—than to put in any effort and risk "failure." Often they're pressured to excel in all areas and feel inadequate if they can't get high grades in every subject. They're perfectionists. Or, if they aren't, very often their parents are.

If you think you've spotted a gifted underachiever among your students, it's a good idea to set up a parent conference. It's best to get help from school counselors or psychologists to diagnose the reasons for underachievement and to discover the child's strengths. These

How To Be a Gifted Teacher With Gifted Underachievers

► Let students test out of content areas they've mastered by using pre-tests or mastery learning techniques.

► Include optional learning activities and independent projects for each unit.

► Allow students to choose among several assignments or to develop their own projects after conferring with you.

► Develop a B.U.G. (Bringing Up Grades) honor roll for students who have not let any grades slip and have brought up at least one grade.

► Use learning-style inventories to develop student profiles as the basis for alternative learning activities.

► Encourage brainstorming and free-association techniques, as well as discovery activities.

► Provide problems requiring higher-level thinking processes— application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

► Institute criterion-referenced evaluation (in which a student is evaluated in relation to successful completion of a task) instead of norm-referenced evaluation (in which students are compared to one another).

► Provide opportunities for student self-evaluation.

► Create opportunities for cooperative learning groups in which four or five students work together and share a common final grade.

► Investigate mentorships, work-study programs, community or summer school programs, independent study, correspondence courses, and library-based programs to which you can refer students.

► Encourage students to express their feelings and concerns, to ask questions about the feelings and concerns of others, and to clarify problems of values and communication.

—M.E.

unfavorably—to the rest of the class.

"Skipping grades may provoke feelings of insecurity because of physical and social immaturity," she adds. "Giving the gifted underachiever additional assignments may also provoke resentment. It's far better to substitute appropriate thought-provoking, open-ended work for memorization or drill assignments."

At the Collins Elementary School, Whitmore and Association member Robin Bennett created a model program for reversing early patterns of chronic and severe underachievement. They grouped identified underachievers together in a full-time, multi-grade classroom and offered individual and group counseling services.

One of Bennett's more successful techniques is the "magic circle" developed by William Glasser. Four days a week students sit in a circle and tell a student seated in the center what they like about him or her. In addition each week students write highly specific letters of praise to a "student of the week." They learn how to both give and receive compliments.

Having worked with gifted underachievers and learning disabled/gifted students for 19 years, Bennett tries to promote students' self-image and to improve communication skills. She advises, "Structure the curriculum so all children meet success and want to come to school."

Bennett and Whitmore suggest four steps for working successfully with gifted underachievers in the regular classroom:

1. Try to determine *why* a particular student isn't achieving up to potential. Observe the student in as many settings as possible to identify positive and negative motivators. Assess the student's cognitive strengths and tasks that seem to promote interest and sustained effort. Consult with parents and, if necessary, other teachers and counselors. Make notes of your observations.

2. Share your observations with your student and ask him or her to correct any misperceptions. Keep your tone positive and relaxed. Find out if the student wants to change.

3. If the student wants to change, engage in problem-solving together. Define the specific problem in terms of behavior and consequences. Then develop possible alternative solutions that are specific, challenging, and can be executed within a short period of time. Bennett does this each month. Select an action plan to try and write up a performance contract.

4. Finally, have the students implement the chosen alternative. Be supportive and communicate with parents. Modify the alternative if necessary—or select another choice. Repeat steps 3 and 4.

Through your positive, committed attitude and communication skills, you can model the positive behavior you would like your underachieving gifted student to express. Then, through your joint success, *each* of you will stand a little taller in your own shoes.

—Melissa Etlin

Steve Crompton

Maureen Canning's Lakewood, Ohio, second and third graders edit their work on the heroes unit. Students wrote, "Don't give up, even when you feel like you're rolling down backwards" and "The most important person to be a hero to is yourself." Canning's jumper reads, "A hero's advice: Work hard, dream big, and never give up."

Steve Crompton

R CLASSROOM?

Very likely. Here's how you can help.

More and more teachers are also concentrating on tapping the potential of culturally different and minority children, although disadvantaged minority students are still more likely to be tracked into LD than white students—and half as likely to be placed in a Gifted and Talented (G/T) class.

Why does a capable student become an underachiever? There are many reasons. Often teachers are too easily satisfied with a student's good work, when *great* work should be forthcoming. Low expectations can have an adverse effect on academic performance, particularly for gifted students.

It's also easy for a gifted student to feel isolated. With the very gifted, these feelings may be particularly intense because of their heightened sensitivity. Sometimes such students decide it makes sense to work hard only in those activities they find personally rewarding, rather than strive to be an all-around high-achieving student and risk further isolation from lower-achieving friends.

Still other gifted underachievers come from families of high-achievers. They feel it's safer not to try at all—and thus

school professionals can work with students—either individually or in small groups—to explore the reasons for their low self-image. An outside therapist may need to work with troubled families. Group counseling for gifted teenagers is particularly successful in providing an opportunity for students to exchange ideas with their peers and to realize they're not alone in having certain problems.

To counteract student feelings of inadequacy, teachers should provide regular support, rather than pressure. The ideal instructional program builds on students' strengths and remediates their weaknesses. Many gifted students thrive on "hands-on," active learning experiences and love humor. They usually respond to teachers who take an interest in them. If remedial work in writing, reading, or math is necessary, try to relate assignments to the student's areas of interest.

Cautions Whitmore: "Placing gifted underachievers in a class made up exclusively of gifted students can spell disaster because underachievers may lack the requisite academic and social skills. With their low self-image, they're likely to compare themselves constantly—and

For Additional Ideas

Association for the Gifted, The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091 (1-800-336-3728). Free *ERIC* Fact Sheets including "Underachieving Gifted Students" by Joanne Rand Whitmore, ED 262526, and bibliographies. For a fee, topical bibliographies and custom computer searches are available.

Education of the Gifted and Talented. Gary A. Davis and Sylvia B. Rimm. Prentice Hall, 1985.

Giftedness, Conflict and Underachievement. Joanne Rand Whitmore. Allyn and Bacon, 1980.

Inviting School Success. Bill Purkey. Wadsworth Publishing, 1978.

NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516. *Characteristics of Gifted/Talented Students.* Frederick Tuttle, Jr. and Lawrence Becker. Revised Ed., 1983. 0732-8-10-D, $9.95. *Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students.* Frederick Tuttle, Jr. and Lawrence Becker. 3rd Ed., 1988, 0727-1-00-D, $11.95.

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POLITICAL ACTION

NEA-PAC: More Campaign Bang for the Buck

The vigor of the education reform movement over the next few years will depend heavily on national leadership in the White House and Congress. Electing those who will renew America's commitment to its public schools depends on each and every NEA member contributing to NEA-PAC, NEA's political action arm.

In 1986, NEA-PAC supported its choices for federal elective office with $2.5 million, and it was money well spent—80 percent of NEA-backed candidates won election. That success translated into some key victories on Capitol Hill, including the enactment or reauthorization of the Vocational Education Act, Omnibus Education Act, Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act, and Head Start, and the successful defense against the Administration's budget cuts.

Candidates are under incredible pressure to come up with campaign funds. In 1986 the 435 House races and 33 Senate races cost $440 million. Politicians accept campaign funds from all kinds of interest groups—realtors, gun owners, dairy farmers, retired federal workers, auto dealers, doctors, and tobacco growers.

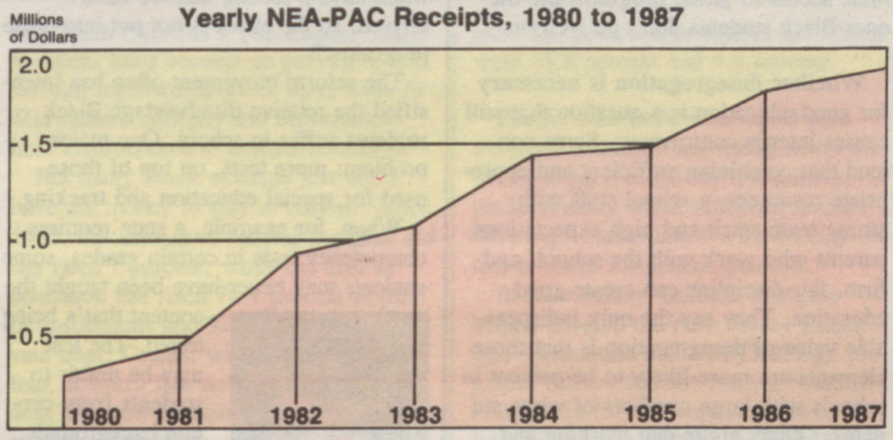
NEA-PAC is one of the largest contributors to federal candidates, but when NEA-PAC donations are coupled with the grassroots efforts of NEA members nationwide, NEA becomes an even more powerful player on the political scene.

"NEA-PAC contributions have been increasing in recent years, but not as fast as they need to," says NEA Government Relations Director Ken Melley. "We recommend that each member contribute at least $10 a year. We're going to have to redouble our efforts in order to continue making significant effective contributions to those we endorse."

Why should Association members contribute to NEA-PAC rather than simply give money directly to a candidate?

"When we donate money to a campaign, we aren't just delivering funds, we're delivering the message that education is important," says Melley. "Ten dollars carries more clout if it's part of a $5,000 contribution (the maximum allowed by federal law) than it would alone."

Yearly NEA-PAC Receipts, 1980 to 1987



No candidates for federal office get NEA-PAC funds without a NEA-PAC endorsement following careful review of their views and voting records on education issues. The assessment of candidates begins with members of local Association PAC Councils and eventually ends up with the NEA-PAC Council, whose members represent the entire membership.

And, NEA-PAC funds go to both Republicans and Democrats. Says Melley, "We like to think of ourselves as the Education Party."

This year, the country will choose not only its next President but a third of the U.S. Senate and all 435 members of the House of Representatives.

As NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell puts it: "For eight years we've had an Administration that didn't think education was a federal function. This 1988 contest may be the most important election for education in history."

—Karen Deans

How To Contribute

NEA-PAC encourages every Association member to give at least $10 annually. There are two ways you can make a donation.

One is through the NEA-PAC payroll deduction or electronic funds transfer plan. If you would like to enroll or to increase your contribution, contact the NEA-PAC representative in your building, your local Association president, or your local UniServ staff person.

If you don't have an automated NEA-PAC contribution system available in your local, your annual check or cash contribution to NEA-PAC will be welcome. Direct your contribution to your state or local Association.

READER POLL RESULTS

'If I Had An Extra $500 I'd Spend It on...'

The December 1987 *NEA Today* asked readers to "Tell Us How You'd Spend $500." We limited the purpose of spending to "professional development" and then worried that $500 might not be enough to buy anything meaningful. Not to worry. School people know how to get something good out of $500.

Some would buy lots of little things. Russell Kaiser, of Warm Springs, Ore., would arrange for a "pick-me-up" snack of milk for his kindergarten students. Speech clinician Wanda Pendergrass of Lincolnton, N.C., would set up a kitty to pay for small birthday and Christmas gifts for her kids, who have few material things. On the other hand, Joan Mary Macey of Binghamton, N.Y., knows you can attain "high living" in the art room just by handing out "purple glitter."

Other teachers would buy One Big Thing, often a computer. Linda Edwards, English teacher in Texarkana, Ark., Mary Ellen Tetrault, fourth grade teacher in Iowa City, and May Nelle Dill of Anniston, Ala., all want a computer in their classroom for the sole use of themselves and their students. Barbara Theiler, a K-6 learning disabilities specialist in Fresno, Calif., and Sheila Metcalfe of Madisonville, Ky., would be sure to have computer printers so students could take their work with them. Susan Rancer, media specialist at the McLeansville (N.C.) Middle School would use most of her $500 to buy Pagemaker software, the first step in a complicated scheme to con her principal into buying a $2,500 Macintosh system. Rancer says the Macintosh will make it a whole lot easier to produce a media bulletin, faculty handbook, and school newsletter. Good luck, Susan; watch out, principal.

Another group of teachers wants to make sure their kids get to certain museums even if they have to leave town to do it. Raymond Ensher, from California's North Fork Union district, would bus his fourth graders (a third are American Indians) to Fresno or Monterey for concerts, galleries, and museums. Kathleen Horstmeyer, from the Lower Merion schools outside Philadelphia, wants to "grow with her students" as together they visit the new National Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C.

Some projects would bring teachers a a lot closer to their subject areas, which of course would benefit their students as well. First grade teacher Joyce Ferguson, Tecumseh, Mich., would acquire local Indian artifacts and buy a "super good microscope" to examine local soil, water, and plants. Spanish teacher Marcelia Maglinte, back in Hawaii after 25 years on the mainland, wants to immerse herself in Hawaiian history by visiting such sites as the Iolani Palace. Nancy Nieman, a middle school U.S. history teacher in Muncie, Ind.—who is more enthusiastic "teaching about places I've actually seen"—would follow the trail of Lewis and Clark to Oregon and then go on to Alaska. Ruth Eskilson, housing teacher in Crown Point, Ind., would make videos to show concrete walls being poured, sill and floor joists being constructed.

Zapping the teacher blahs is another target for the $500. Marilyn Kissinger-Mazurkiewicz, cosmetology instructor at Berks Vocational-Technical School, Lessport, Pa., would buy personal and professional development tapes and books for the new library of the Berks West Staff Development and Support Group—"faculty members tired of negative attitudes and determined to become a motivated faculty," she says.

Jane Tyson, in Mercersburg, Pa., would send all 10 staff members of her small elementary school off on a weekend retreat to discuss one theme, such as whole language development, and to get to know each other.

Sixth grade teacher Martha Roberts, in Jefferson County, Ala., would focus on teachers' emotional wellness by stocking every school with tapes about such topics as stress, student peer relationships and characteristics at various ages, and teacher mutual support groups.

For general self-improvement, Johnna Puttoff, of Frankfort, Ky., would take a traditional route by attending the Chautauqua Institute in upstate New York. Barbara DeWitt, of Rockville, Md., would go to Disney World to improve her teaching and PR skills at Walt Disney communications seminars for educators.

Eleanor Dunn, Franklin, Pa., keeps getting turned down by her district when she asks to take a Dale Carnegie course in leadership training to benefit herself and, indirectly, her students. Which raises the question: Hey, District, who knows more about what Ms. Dunn needs, she or you? If she's wrong, she'll tell you and you'll know not to spend the money again. If she's right, great. Either way you've both learned something.

Getting organized: Lorri Gilmur-Dillman, of Grandview, Wash., would buy release time for herself and her middle school colleagues so they could organize all their kits, clippings, and articles into "a quick, easy, usable system."

Colleen Batley, of Neenah, Wisc., wants to free up four days to develop a storage and circulation system for AV materials and computer software in her library media center. Batley would pay an author/illustrator of children's books to come in to speak and read to all the children in her elementary school while she was working behind the scenes.

Some would buy books. Karen Stone, library media specialist at Smithville (Ohio) High School, would buy a set of English-language fiction classics. Ida Rutske, of Glencoe, Mich., would buy paperback books to give to "nonreading" fifth graders as a reward for reading their schoolbooks—maybe a 32-page paperback for every 128 text pages.

Two more: Richard Fuller and colleagues at Richmond (Va.) Tech Center would take their Flunkbusters antidropout program on the road. Randall Dehetre, of Lewiston (Me.) Junior High, who can't in good conscience let his drafting students listen to the radio while they work, would buy a short-wave radio, outside antenna, and world map so the kids could listen to and learn from, say, the BBC, VOA, or Radio Moscow.

And there were many more. Lots of return on $500 here.

—Nancy R. Needham

EQUITY/EXCELLENCE

BLACK EDUCATION

How Far Have We Come?

Ending legal segregation dismantled a symbol of Black inferiority—but that alone didn't guarantee Black children a good education.

Thirty years after nine tense Black teenagers desegregated Little Rock's Central High School with the help of federal troops, the city is again working to desegregate its schools. At the same time, nationwide, advocates for Black children contend that their schools are still largely separate, and definitely unequal.

Have we come full circle, then? If not, what's different? Just how does the status of Black students today compare with their position 35 years ago, when the Civil Rights Movement began?

For a start, the pattern of segregation is different now. Black students are most integrated in the Southern states, once segregated by law. Illinois, New York, and Michigan are now the states where segregation is greatest, according to a study conducted by University of Chicago researcher Gary Orfield.

Integration of Black students hasn't increased or decreased much in this decade, the study found. It's grown most in the states with the most comprehensive court-ordered busing plans. States lacking such plans are seeing segregation grow as minority groups crowd into poor areas. Reporting in 1987, NEA's Black Concerns Study Committee said that on the whole, more Black students were attending segregated schools than in 1981.

Procedures that block integration are standard in some places. "If you desegregate, then track, you've changed one difficulty for another," says Asa Hilliard, professor of Urban Life Education at Georgia State University. "Tracking continues the effects of segregation by other means."

"In too many circumstances, we do not expect certain children to learn," adds NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell. "Neither race nor economics should be a factor in where you are placed in schools."

Researcher Jeannie Oakes of the Rand Corporation notes a special instance of resegregation by tracking: "In some places Black children are tracked into Educable Mentally Retarded or special education classes, while white kids are seen as learning disabled." This lopsided placement of Black students in EMR classes doesn't show up in states where Blacks form a small proportion of the population.

NEA member Zenobia Washington teaches English at South High School in Wichita, Kansas. "While Blacks are in the system now," she says, "concerted efforts are not being made to ensure that they're in gifted or honors programs. We don't seem to believe they can do well. The standardized tests that determine access to gifted programs are the ones Black students don't do well on."

Whether desegregation is necessary for good education is a question that still causes intense controversy. Some contend that combining sufficient and appropriate resources, a school staff with strong team spirit and high expectations, parents who work with the school, and firm, fair discipline can create good education. They say the only indispensable value of desegregation is that those elements are more likely to be present in schools with large numbers of white students. Others argue that working and playing with the other kinds of people who make up our country are indispensable to good education.

But, setting desegregation and integration aside, how good is the education Black students are getting?

One answer comes from scores on SAT tests. These don't give a typical picture, because they represent only students who mean to go to college—and that's a shrinking proportion of Black high school graduates. Blacks' scores on the SAT verbal and math exams each have risen by about 20 points in the past 10 years. There still remains a gap of roughly 100 points between Black and white scores.

Black students are more likely than ever to graduate from high school. Of Black young people aged 18 to 24 in 1976, 67.5 percent had finished high school, while in 1985 the figure had risen to 75.6 percent. Still, 25 percent is an unacceptably high dropout rate—and in some cities with concentrations of poor Black children, the dropout rate reaches 50 percent.

"A quarter century ago," Zenobia Washington says, "people recognized the necessity of equal access for all students. They set up intervention programs that would really help students get into the system. Now it seems both Black and white have a feeling that we have arrived, so the effort is not put into those programs."

The reform movement often has intensified the relative disadvantage Black students suffer in school. One major problem: more tests, on top of those used for special education and tracking.

When, for example, a state requires competency tests in certain grades, some students may never have been taught the content that's being tested. The test may be unfair to students from certain backgrounds. Students may not get real remediation before retaking the test. Those who repeatedly fail the tests are likely to be pushed out of school. Black students are in disproportionate danger of such pitfalls, as they are of suspension and expulsion.

Joe Di Dio

Barbara Hudgins

"Dropout is a problem, of course," says NEA member Barbara Hudgins of Atlantic City, N.J., "along with low teacher expectations and scarcity of role models in the community and in the school. But beyond that is a misplacement of values, an emphasis on acquisition of material items. Twenty-five years ago, many Black families used the church as a base for developing their value system. Black parents strongly supported schools and teachers in helping their child succeed. In the community, people interacted more—the teacher and the child's family might belong to the same church.

"Now the strong institutional base is gone—even in the South, which people still think of as the Bible Belt," notes Hudgins, who grew up and began teaching in North Carolina.

The children of the poor are more likely than others to suffer when institutions collapse—and Black children are more likely than others to be poor. In its current *State of Black America* report, for example, the National Urban League notes that in 1986 the median income for Black families was $17,604, about 57 percent of the white figure of $30,809. Black income is pulled down by the inability of many Blacks to find jobs—about one Black worker in five is unemployed or underemployed or has given up looking for work.

Income makes a difference, too, in standardized test scores: average SAT scores for children whose annual family incomes are less than $10,000 are more than 100 points lower than for those with incomes over $70,000.

In the past, determined teachers have overcome the effects of poverty. Teacher and student don't have to be the same race for that to happen. But in many cases it helps for students to see people who have faced the same difficulties and overcome magnificently.

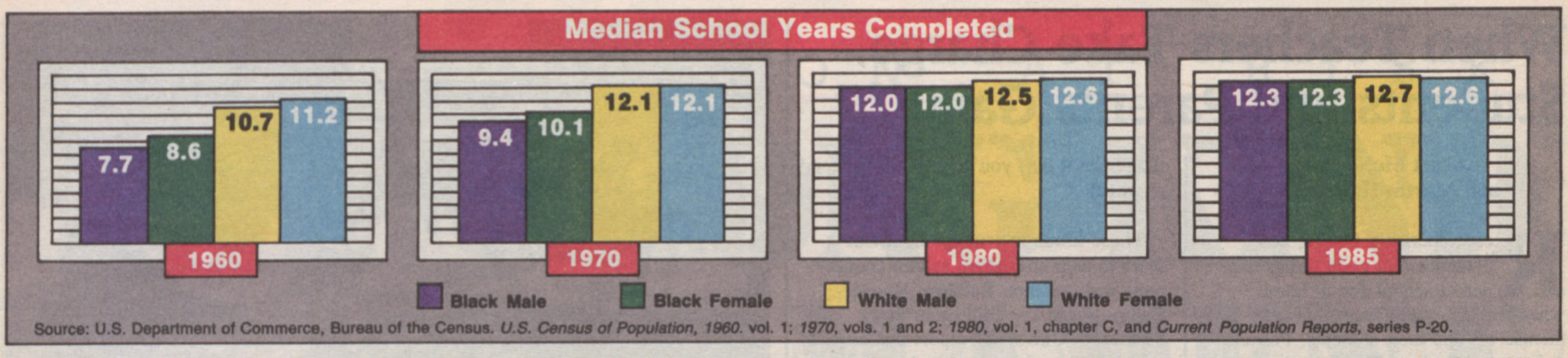
Studies of young Black children have shown that simply having a Black teacher increases their self-esteem. NEA's Black Concerns Study Committee pointed out that Black males especially need to see Black men as professionals in the school.

Association member Lou Ethel Nauden teaches first grade in Little Rock. "Black parents today are requesting that their children be put in Black teachers' rooms," she observes. "Otherwise they feel their children aren't being as challenged or motivated as they should be."

More and more schoolchildren are Black. The Carnegie Task Force on Teaching noted that in 23 of the nation's largest 25 school districts, Black students

Don Peterson

EQUITY/EXCELLENCE



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *U.S. Census of Population, 1960.* vol. 1; *1970,* vols. 1 and 2; *1980,* vol. 1, chapter C, and *Current Population Reports,* series P-20.

are now a majority. But Black teachers are in ever-shorter supply.

"Desegregation has resulted in the loss of Black teachers and principals," notes Asa Hilliard. "Traditionally, those people didn't just teach but gave community service and acted as role models."

In fact, the proportion of U.S. teachers who are Black fell from 7.8 percent in 1981 to 6.9 percent in 1986—when Blacks made up 16.2 percent of U.S. public school students. More startling, the actual number of Black teachers fell from about 192,000 to about 176,000.

Fewer Black college students are going into education. The American Council on Education reports that in 1985 minorities earned only half as many bachelor's degrees in education as in 1976. By 1986, according to the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Blacks constituted just 5 percent of education students.

Becoming a teacher means first going to college—and the proportion of Black high school graduates attending college has been falling, from 33.5 percent in 1976 to 26.1 percent in 1985. That year Blacks made up 14 percent of the population but only 8.1 percent of college students. In Georgia, 17 percent of Black and 44 percent of white high school graduates entered the state higher education system. In Florida, the number of Black freshmen decreased 5 percent in one year, from 1985 to 1986.

Black college students are also less likely than whites to graduate. Predominantly white institutions often take in bright Black students, then don't support them. In the past few years, highly-publicized racist incidents—often involving beatings by gangs of white students—have occurred at such institutions as the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of Michigan, and South Carolina's The Citadel. Such incidents have become so pervasive that last fall representatives of more than 70 Midwestern colleges and universities held a conference to discuss solutions.

But many Black students just don't have the money to stay in college. Since 1980, the amount of federal financial aid has risen 7 percent, while the cost of education has risen 76.4 percent at public institutions and 92.8 percent at private ones. Grants, which once made up four of every five dollars of federal student aid, now constitute barely half—the rest goes into loans.

What happens to Black high school graduates who don't make it to college? Some go into the armed services: the proportion of military personnel who were Black rose from 15 percent in 1975 to 19 percent in 1984—an increase of almost one third. Others go to trade school.

Many are simply unemployed. In 1986, 40.6 percent of Black high school graduates aged 18 and 19 and 26.7 percent of those aged 20 to 24 were jobless. The comparable figures for whites were 13.8 percent and 9.4 percent.

People who believe in equal and excellent education are trying many tactics to bring it about. In Little Rock, 14 predominantly white suburban schools have been consolidated with the city system to make integration possible.

In New Jersey, Barbara Hudgins helped develop the New Jersey Education Association's Urban Challenge program. "NJEA and the NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education make grants to teams of parents for programs addressing urban problems," explains Hudgins.

In Little Rock, Lou Ethel Nauden has an NFIE Hilda Maehling Fellowship to identify and help children who enter first grade without the language skills they need for reading. Nauden expects the program to cut first-grade failures by 70 percent.

Did the Civil Rights Movement change the school experience of Black children? Unequivocally, yes—it dismantled the system of legal segregation and opened the doors of public colleges and universities to Black young people.

Still there is much to do to improve the quality of education many Black children receive in school, and to increase their chances of going to college. That's a job for all Americans concerned about our country's future. *—Jane Power*

In 1957, it took 1,000 members of the 101st Airborne Division to get nine Black youngsters into Little Rock, Arkansas' Central High School. Then Little Rock's schools closed down for a year—but when they reopened, desegregation had begun.

The Bettman Archives

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The Bettman Archives

RESEARCH CLUES

When Teachers Take Charge, Students and Parents Gain

Robert McNergney
and Martin Haberman

Researchers are finding new evidence that good things happen at school and at home when teachers take charge—believe in themselves and their students. Patricia Ashton and Rodman Webb at the University of Florida have helped make the case for the "right stuff" in teaching or what many are calling "teacher efficacy." High sense-of-efficacy teachers believe they have the power to effect change, and they appear to help students achieve more academically than low sense-of-efficacy teachers.

It's not just what teachers believe that matters, but *how* they translate their beliefs into action. High sense-of-efficacy teachers try to teach even the most difficult students. One teacher put it this way: "You see, [low achieving] kids need teachers. They probably need them more than any other students. They need a teacher who will work with them and who will care."

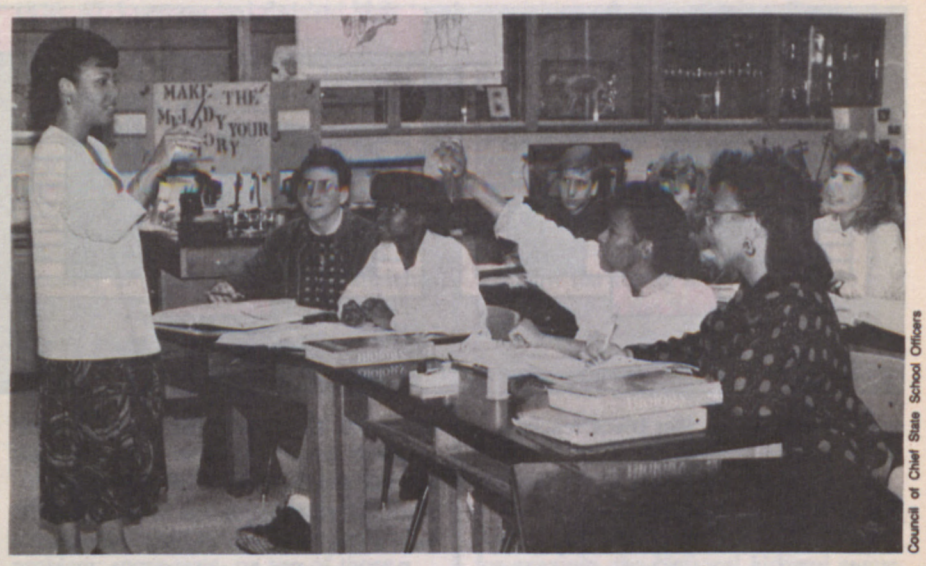
These same teachers work to build warm relationships with their students. They don't see these relationships as threats to their authority or self-esteem. "Students come and talk to me and I listen. I don't put myself in the role of counselor, but sometimes I'm there and I have to do that job. So if a student comes in on drugs or is having family problems, I'll try to do something about it. I think students would describe me as somebody they enjoy."

What do these teachers do when students misbehave? Ashton and Webb suggest that they make corrective and directive statements that are firm and to the point: "Move up a seat....I want to see you after class....Those of you at the door, please come back and sit down....If you don't listen, you're going to miss this....Now who's whistling? Cut it out, you'll have all weekend to whistle."

These kinds of teacher behavior seem to help strengthen school connections with parents. Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey and her colleagues at Vanderbilt University report that a teacher's efficacy relates positively to parent involvement in schools: The more teachers believe that they are effective in teaching, that their students can learn, and that there is a body of professional knowledge available to them when they need assistance, the more parents take part in their children's education.

The Vanderbilt group surveyed 1,003 teachers and 66 principals in a mid-southern state to investigate parent involvement in schools. Involvement was defined in five ways: parent participation in parent-teacher conferences, volunteer work in schools, parent tutoring of children on school-related tasks such as homework, home instruction, and teachers' perceptions of parental support. In addition to the teacher's feelings of efficacy, the researchers studied other possible factors affecting parent involvement: family socioeconomic status (SES), child's grade level, class size, degree of organizational rigidity (limits on teachers' freedom to take instructional action), principal perception of teacher efficacy, and instructional coordination (teachers' knowledge of what is taught by their colleagues).

Here is what they found. Teacher efficacy was the most important factor in parent involvement; the more efficacious teachers felt, the higher the parent involvement on all five measures. Also, schools with higher SES families had higher parent involvement, especially participation in parent-teacher conferences and volunteer work. When instruction was coordinated, parents were more supportive. In schools where principals perceived teachers as efficacious, more parent tutoring and more home instruction were occurring.



Council of Chief State School Officers

Parents and teachers can influence one another, and their interactions can work to the advantage or disadvantage of students. Principals, too, play a critical role in these interactions by creating conditions for school excellence—conditions that lend themselves to the development of teacher efficacy. These are shaped in part by how principals buffer their teachers from distractions, by how they evaluate teachers, by their support for skill development, and by their efforts to encourage teacher collaboration.

Educational practitioners and researchers have long recognized the importance of strong home-school connections. The common contribution of home and school to student achievement has been shown to exceed their individual contributions; that is, family and school working together for student achievement are more important than either alone.

Imagine what might happen if teachers and principals and parents really believed they had the power to influence children's lives for the better, and they worked together to do so. We just might prepare young people to take charge of their lives and to make their future not a matter of survival but one of prosperity.

Robert McNergney is associate professor at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903; Martin Haberman is professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201. They prepared this column for NEA Today *with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association. They welcome reader reactions.*

This month's column is based on two sources. "Parent Involvement: Contributions of Teacher Efficacy, School Socioeconomic Status, and Other School Characteristics," was written by Kathleen V. Hoover-Dempsey, Otto C. Bassler, and Jane S. Brissie of Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. It appeared in the *American Educational Research Journal*, Fall 1987 (vol. 24, no. 23, pp. 417-35). *Making a Difference: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Student Achievement*, by Patricia T. Ashton and Rodman B. Webb, is a 225-page book in the Research on Teaching monograph series (White Plains, N.Y.: Longman, Inc., 1986).

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EDUCATION AND DEFENSE

FOR A NATION AT RISK

THE WRONG KIND OF REARMAMENT

Five years ago, the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned that the "educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation."

The Commission's landmark 1983 report, *A Nation At Risk,* went on to charge that America has, "in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament."

Citizens, the report concluded, must "provide the fiscal support and stability required" to improve education.

"It is by our willingness to take up the challenge, and our resolve to see it through," *A Nation At Risk* said clearly, "that America's place in the world will be either secured or forfeited." The issue was one of survival.

Where's all that funding support *A Nation At Risk* recommended for education? If there are tax dollars available for Star Wars, why can't we afford star schools?

Five years later, the nation's schools are still waiting for that "fiscal support and stability" demanded by *A Nation At Risk*. Too many schools are still missing textbooks and classroom supplies. Too many classes are still too overcrowded with students. And too many teachers are still struggling to make it on inadequate and unprofessional salaries (*see story on page 4*).

So whatever became of that recommendation in *A Nation At Risk* for more "fiscal support" for public education? Don't our nation's leaders think we need to undo the "unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament" attacked so fiercely in *A Nation At Risk*?

After all, as *A Nation At Risk* put it so bluntly: "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

Unfortunately, the authors of *A Nation At Risk* seemed to have pushed the wrong buttons with their martial metaphors. The federal government has put billions of additional tax dollars into rearmament since 1983—but those dollars have gone into military hardware, not classrooms.

Since 1983, in fact, the White House has never sought to increase federal aid to education as much as $1 billion over the year before. For fiscal years 1985, 1986, 1987, and 1988, the Reagan Administration actually asked for over $10 billion in *cuts* for education.

Over that same period, the White House asked for more than $22 billion for the Strategic Defense Initiative, the widely controversial "Star Wars" space weapons program.

But that $22 billion sought for Star Wars pales against the even larger sums that the federal government has devoted to weaponry and military spending since the release of *A Nation At Risk*. During this Administration, in fact, preparations for war cost $21,000 for every U.S. household—a total of $2 trillion—according to the Center for Defense Information. The annual federal budget deficit rose from $79 billion to $178 billion, raising the national debt from $1 trillion to $2.6 trillion and transforming this country from the world's greatest creditor nation to the world's greatest debtor. The statistics on this page tell more of the story.

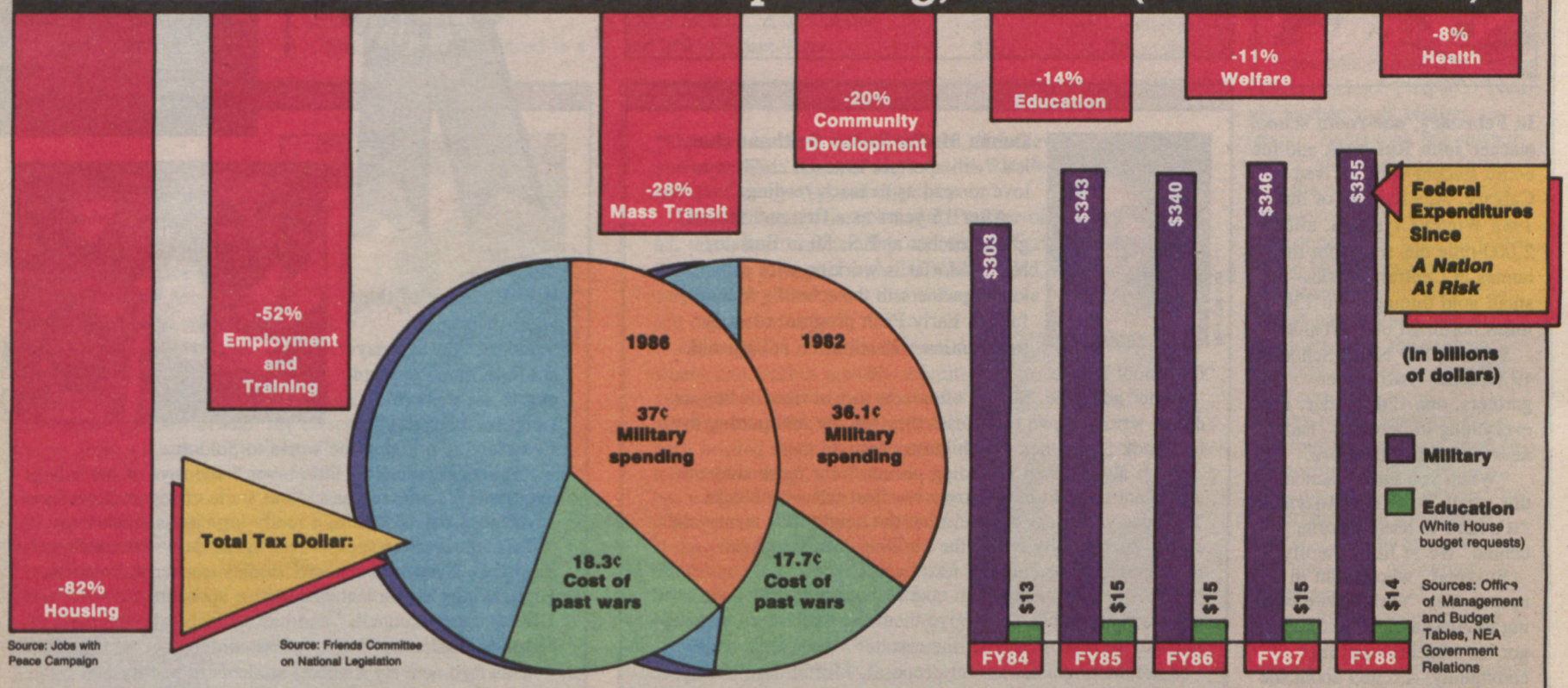
Over a generation ago, the White House had an occupant who understood that true national security means more than military armament. Said Dwight D. Eisenhower some 35 years ago:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

Since *A Nation At Risk* challenged America in 1983, those guns, warships, and rockets have also come at the expense of those who are not learning.

—Jane Power

WINNERS & LOSERS: Federal Spending, 1982-86 (After Inflation)



—Marian Wright Edelman, president, Children's Defense Fund

"We plan to build about 226 missiles at about $110 million each. For that price, we could eliminate poverty in 101,000 female-headed families for a year. If we cancelled the whole program, we could eliminate poverty for all children in the United States twice over and still send all female heads of low-income families to college for one year."

People

In February, one-room school teacher **John Rusyniak** and his entire student body arrived in Calgary, Alberta, site of the 1988 Winter Olympics, after a 2,000-mile bus trip from their homes in Central, Alaska—a small gold mining town 130 miles northeast of Fairbanks.

Some of Far North School's 19 students—two kindergartners, one 12th grader, and everything in between—had never left Central before.

"When you have a school this small," explains Rusyniak, "it's hard to leave anyone behind. We're like a family."

Rusyniak, who taught in upstate New York before coming to Alaska eight years ago, got his students—and the community—excited about the Olympics. The district allocated $2,000 of school activity money for the trip. The remaining $6,500 was raised by the students and community—through bakesales, auctions, raffles, and potluck dinners. Eight community members accompanied the Far North students.

"The $8,500 was a real bare-bones budget," says Rusyniak. "We brought sleeping bags and stayed in schools in Calgary and along the way. The project did so much to bring the community together in support of the children and the school." □

Ron Colleran

Donna Moffat knows firsthand that it's "as important to teach children to love to read as to teach reading."

After 15 years as a first and second grade teacher at P.S. 80 in Buffalo, N.Y., Moffat is working with prekindergartners in the school's federally funded Early Push program of early intervention with children at high risk for school failure.

In her new role, Moffat often acts as a scribe for her students, writing down the stories they tell her and putting them into book form; then the children illustrate them.

She's also created "building permits" for those students who want to build towers over two feet tall with blocks. They use yardsticks to determine the height they want—and if they successfully create the building, Moffat takes a photograph of the children next to it.

"This activity helps them take responsibility for their own actions," she explains. "I give them the freedom to choose, but they're responsible for the results."

After writing a successful proposal, Moffat bore chief responsibility for creating a new $40,000 school playground. While the construction workers were busy, so too were Moffat and her students—taking pictures and writing a book about the work. Now they're busy playing and developing their gross motor skills in a safe place.

Moffat's classroom is a rich environment that brings in the community. With a mini-grant, she's created a pizza parlor (complete with felt pizzas, uniforms, and "no smoking" signs), a bakery, a zoo, and a veterinarian's office. In these hands-on centers, children do work in math, language, health/nutrition, and motor skills development. Sometimes they work with senior citizens.

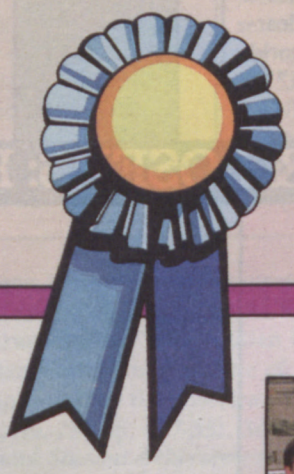
Outside the classroom, Moffat serves as a lecturer and as a member of the National Task Force on Early Education. □

Ron Colleran

Mike Spinelli

"I'm a real zealot for writing," says California Association member **Alice Taylor Hanson.** "It's a way for students to organize—and better deal with—the world."

Hanson's eighth grade English students at Fitch Middle School on Fort Ord *write*. So do the school's other students. They write for *Voice of the Turtle*, a student literary



Once again, all fou national Teacher are NEA member outstanding members b year, the Teacher of the sponsored by Encyclop *Housekeeping*, and the School Officers. The Ma report the winner.

Chlaus Lotscher

Because many of the young people in Soldotna, Alaska, may not have much opportunity to see the world, **Lorraine "Sammy" Crawford** is bringing the world to Soldotna.

"This is a wonderful little town," she says of her village on Alaska's southern coast, "but some of my students have never been out. To them, a really big city is Anchorage."

To make world issues as real as the daily fish catch and oil prices, Crawford, a social studies teacher at Soldotna High, brings in political candidates, sponsors a districtwide UN "Security Council," and has students take the parts of historical figures to face a "press conference" of classmates.

Crawford actively involves students in history and current events in order to, as she says, "hook 'em."

And it works. Crawford notes that one of her former students who became interested in politics while writing letters to legislators as a class project later became state chair of the Democratic Party. Another now sits in the state house of representatives.

Crawford, a 21-year teaching veteran, insists on hard work from her students—for which she makes no apologies.

"I tell them we're on a mission. I have a sense of the importance of what we do. If you're going to have a country that's a superpower, or even get a car fixed right, you have to have quality learning. It doesn't matter if a child grows up to be a legislator or a mechanic, the emphasis must be on doing things right.

"I do love teaching," Crawford adds. "I'm working with these kids who want to learn, and telling them about the world, and getting paid for it!" □

Chlaus Lotscher

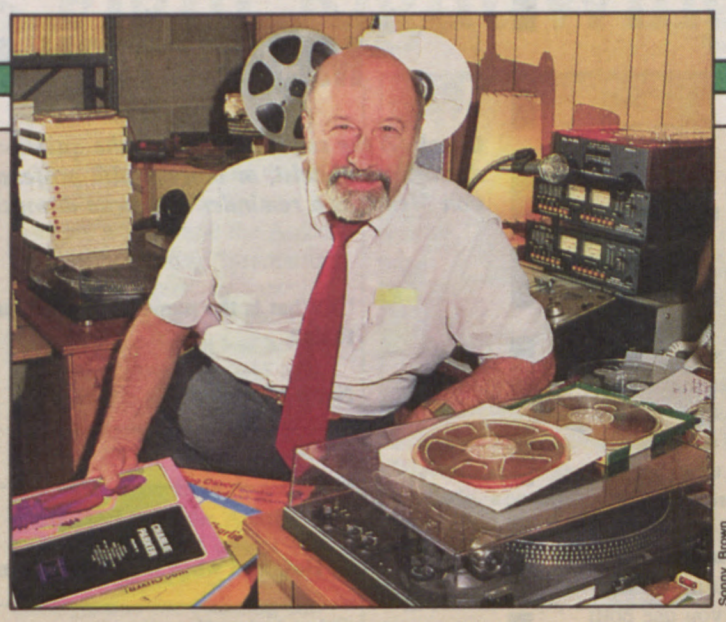
magazine Hanson started three years ago.

The magazine, published twice yearly, is written, edited, and illustrated by Fitch students. The current issue contains 152 pages of student poetry, stories, and haiku.

"Students do it all before school and at lunch," says Hanson. "They're so proud of their work in print."

Fitch's multiracial student body is drawn primarily from the military base. "It's a very mobile population," explains Hanson. "I have eighth graders who've attended 13 schools. The magazine gives students a chance to achieve real success. And it makes them take their own—and each other's—writing seriously. They start writing for their teachers and the magazine—and end up writing for themselves." □

r finalists in the 1988 of the Year competition s. We salute these four elow. Now in its 26th Year competition is aedia Britannica, *Good* Council of Chief State y-June *NEA Today* will



Sonny Brown

Attention, jazz fanatics. If you happen to be around Evansville, Ind., on a Saturday night between 9 and 11, tune in to WNIN-FM88.

You'll hear Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Woody Herman, Oscar Peterson, Charlie Parker—all the masters of jazz—on "The Jazz Scene." The mellow-voiced deejay is jazz buff **Bob Patry**, an Association member and middle school social studies teacher at Evansville's Plaza Park School.

Patry is a veteran of 23 years as a principal and 10 years as a classroom teacher in area schools.

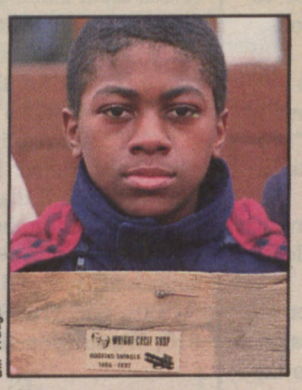
His show isn't produced in a studio. The smooth jazz sounds originate from "the hole"—Patry's name for that part of his basement where he keeps his record collection and recording equipment.

Only a few of Patry's seventh and eighth grade students know he has a jazz show.

"Kids aren't noted for listening to jazz," Patry explains, "but occasionally one might say, 'Hey, I heard you on the radio Saturday night.' I think maybe their parents listen."

Patry began collecting records in high school. Today his collection includes about 1,000 records, 200 cassettes, and 200 compact discs. □

Bill Waugh



Bill Waugh

A Pride-in-Community Day visit for some Dayton, Ohio, middle schoolers has resulted in a student project of which the community can well be proud!

When MacFarlane Elementary School Chapter 1 reading teacher **Judy Haller** (above, right) took her seventh, eighth, and ninth graders to visit the nearby Wright Brothers' bicycle shop, the students were appalled at what they saw.

The building where Daytonians Wilbur and Orville Wright had worked was so dilapidated that the students promptly decided to do something about it.

They raised $900 toward a new roof for the cycle shop by sponsoring a student-faculty ballgame, and then lobbied the city commission for another $2,000. Local businesses contributed the remaining money needed.

Four MacFarlane teachers spent an afternoon at a dumpster retrieving the original cedar shingles, which students cleaned, marked with plaques, and gave to anyone contributing $10 to the restoration project.

Haller's students this year are carrying the project one step further. They're lobbying for designation of the Wright Brothers' neighborhood as a historic site and for state funds to complete renovation of the cycle shop and a nearby building where the brothers once ran a print shop.

"We'd welcome contributions from *NEA Today* readers," says Haller. "And there are still some shingles available." □

Harrison McClary

"Genuine learning comes when students use their whole mind, not just their memory," asserts seventh grade social studies teacher **Terry Weeks** of Murfreesboro, Tenn. "The students are the main agents in the process—I'm just there as a guide.

"If you as a teacher are enthusiastic," Weeks says, "that enthusiasm spreads through the classroom and you'll have the students with you all the way."

Involvement is another principle for Weeks, who was membership chair for the Tennessee Education Association last year and is a member of the TEA Board of Directors and past president of his local Association, the Rutherford Education Association. "As a history teacher, I always try to let the students know a person should participate in the game of life in every arena. And as a teacher, I consider the Association one of the arenas. If you're going to be a teacher, you need to be working for your profession, to make it better."

Harrison McClary

In a state that offers higher pay to teachers who climb a career ladder, Weeks has refused to leave Level I. "Many teachers apply for Level III for the extra money, not to become better teachers," he observes. "We as a profession don't want weak teachers—but you have to increase salary first, then raise standards. It will never work the other way around."

Weeks, with 14 years experience, teaches world geography and Tennessee history alternate semesters at Murfreesboro's Central Middle School.

A Rutherford County native, Weeks likes teaching in Murfreesboro. "It's a middle-sized town with small-town features—a real friendly place," he says. "It's close to Nashville. And," he adds, "as a teacher of Tennessee history, I'm aware that it's in the exact center of the state." □

"One day in class a student said, 'I believe everything you say.' That's great," says **Addie Rhodes Lee**, "but it also puts a big responsibility on you."

Lee, Alabama's first National Teacher of the Year finalist, takes that responsibility seriously. "I try especially hard to establish a rapport with the students and their parents. It carries over to the point that if they have a problem, they can call me at night."

Bill Ingram

Although the Vocational Center where Lee teaches actively recruits young men, most of her students are young women. "I work very hard helping them develop a positive self-concept," says Lee. "It has a high correlation with student achievement. It's important to look at the potential of each student. Everybody has strengths, so build on them while you're working to eliminate the weaknesses.

"When class started this year, I asked the students how many believed in themselves. Two raised their hands," Lee recalls. "In December I asked again, and they all raised their hands. Once a former student came back and told me I'd demanded more than the students thought they could produce, and they lived up to it. She said she'd decided to become a business education teacher in hopes of doing the same thing for students someday."

Lee, a 24-year classroom veteran, teaches at the Rogers Area Vocational Center in Gardendale, near Birmingham. Her classes include typing, word processing, shorthand, accounting, and general office skills.

"If the students apply themselves, there's no reason they can't be productive citizens right out of high school," she says. "If their parents can afford to send them to college, good. If not, or if they want to earn some money while they're in college, they'll need the skills." □

Bill Ingram

YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

The Other Drug Problem

There's a hidden drug problem affecting a majority of Americans over age 50: drug misuse.

"We have about a million drug addicts in our country," says Robert Windom, assistant secretary for health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "But we have close to 30 million older people who take legally prescribed medications, and half of them are simply not paying attention."

Patients of all ages can have problems with medicine misuse, but a study by the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) indicates that older adults are particularly at risk. People over age 65 make up only 12 percent of the population, but they consume 25 percent of all prescription medications—400 million a year. People over 60 account for 40 percent of all adverse drug reactions.

Drug misuse can take various forms: overdoses, adverse reactions to other medications you take, and "subpotency" (not taking enough medicine to cure the disease).

NCPIE has identified six factors that can lead to drug misuse among older people:

► Poor communication between the patient and the health care professional dispensing the drug. According to the NCPIE study, many older patients "don't want to be a bother," don't understand the doctor's technical terms, or don't mention the other drugs they're taking.

► Too many prescriptions at the same time. The average person over age 65 gets 13 prescriptions annually.

► Treatment by several different health-care professionals, each of whom is unaware of what the other is prescribing.

► Treatment by someone unfamiliar with how an older person's body reacts to medications.

► Physical disabilities, such as poor vision or memory loss, that make it hard to take medications as prescribed.

► Intentional misuse of drugs, either by taking too much or too little or simply not taking the prescription.

If you want to maintain your health after retirement, you must take responsibility for the way you use both prescription and nonprescription drugs. Take time to talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about any medication prescribed.

See if your pharmacist will maintain a record of all your prescriptions and screen them automatically for possible dangerous combinations. (NEA's Pharmacy Service operates such a computerized service for all customers. Call 1-800-637-4636 for more information.)

NCPIE has published a free brochure, "Medicine: Before You Take It, Talk About It," that offers advice for older patients on the safe use of medicines. For a copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to NCPIE, 666 11th St., N.W., Suite 810, Washington, DC 20001.

—Marian Clayton

Just Out

A new Guaranteed Issue Life Insurance exclusively for NEA-Retired members 55 years of age or older is now available through NEA Special Services. For more information, call Special Services toll free at 1-800-637-4636.

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Drinks to avoid _____

Medicines to avoid _____

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☐ **Are there any side effects and what do I do if they occur?**

Possible side effects _____

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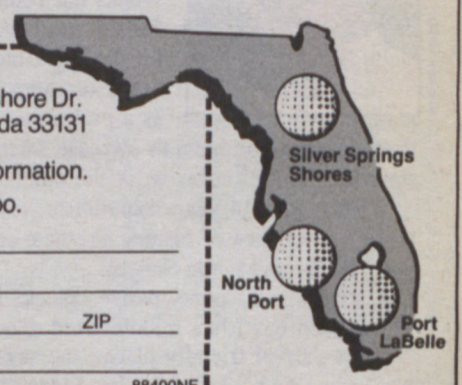

YOU AND THE LAW

Teachers Fight Right-Wing Attacks

Launching outrageous charges against the NEA has become a staple fundraising technique of financially shaky right-wing organizations. Recently, these extremists have made the error of directing their character attacks at innocent classroom teachers as well. But to their surprise, the extremists are discovering that individual teachers—as distinct from powerful organizations like the NEA—can sue for defamation and win their lawsuits.

That's because a private citizen need only prove the allegations false. The burden of proof is greater for the NEA or other large organizations. Such "public figures" must prove that the charges were made with "actual malice" (i.e., with knowledge of their falsity). And they have to prove that the charges caused them financial damage.

In NEA's case, even a claim of financial harm would probably be laughed out of court, since the Association's membership has risen by nearly 200,000 in the last four years.

On the other hand, individuals—unlike organizations—can recover not only for financial damage but for emotional distress.

So NEA has decided that lawsuits against the right-wingers who accuse the Association of promoting "premarital sex for teenagers" or "secular humanism" aren't winnable. But the Association has helped individual members fight back against vicious acts of character assassination.

In 1985 Jan Cole, a sixth-grade teacher in the Adams County (Colorado) school district, outside Denver, sued three parents for claiming she practiced demonology, the occult, and witchcraft.

Apparently upset by relaxation techniques Cole used to help children handle stress and do creative writing, the parents complained to school officials and to others in the community that—among other things—Cole "was doing witchcraft," "was possessed by a demon," and "hypnotized children in the class."

The Adams County school board absolved Cole of any wrongdoing, but local media reported some of the charges.

John Sunderland/PHOTOSTAFF Inc.

Colorado sixth grade teacher Jan Cole, accused of promoting the occult and witchcraft in her classroom.

In March 1987, an Adams County jury returned a verdict in the lawsuit in Cole's favor and awarded her $110,500 for injury to reputation, emotional distress, and punitive damages. The case is on appeal.

Linda Deupree, an 18-year veteran teacher employed by the Independence, Missouri, schools, teaches an elective course on family relations to high school seniors.

In November 1983 the school janitor read or copied excerpts from three reference books Deupree kept in her classroom, including *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. He alerted the local chapter of the conservative Pro-Family Forum about the books, and group members told the school board that Deupree was using pornography in the classroom.

The board supported Deupree, but a local radio station played up the controversy. During a discussion about Deupree's class on a call-in show, a listener phoned in to say, among other things, that "the teacher actually derives probably a very secret sort of sexual gratification" from teaching the class.

Deupree, who was listening to the broadcast, was "horrified and humiliated." She sued the listener for defamation, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and invasion of privacy.

The court dismissed the defamation and privacy claims but awarded Deupree $10,000 in damages for emotional distress. Both parties have appealed to a federal circuit court.

Cole and Deupree were backed by their school boards. But for teachers who are punished by their boards when accusations are made, the appropriate legal course may be not a libel suit against the attackers, but a suit against the school board alleging violation of constitutional rights.

Ed Stachura, whose suit-in-progress was noted in this column in June 1986, last year won an out-of-court settlement from the Memphis, Mich., school board (the amount is being kept secret by school board request). Stachura had been suspended without due process when parents objected to certain materials in his life sciences course—even though the school administration had approved them.

NEA members should recognize that not every damaging accusation made against them will support a lawsuit for damages. Citizens have the right to voice good faith criticism of a public school teacher's classroom performance.

Such critics rarely step over the line from legitimate complaint to an actionable tort. But when they do, it is apparent that juries will lend a sympathetic ear to a teacher whose good name and reputation are unfairly sullied.

—Mike Simpson, NEA Office of General Counsel

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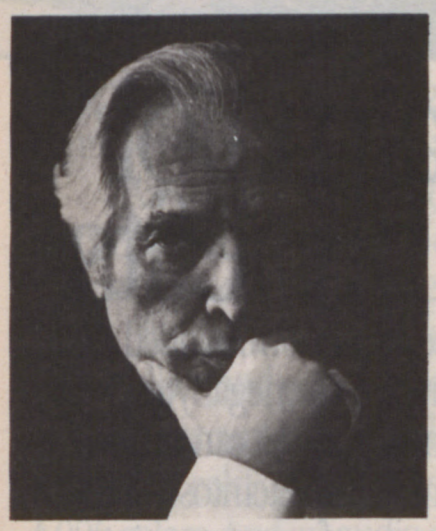

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BOOK BEAT

'Hamilton High': America in Microcosm?

In *The World We Created at Hamilton High*, Gerald Grant, professor of education and sociology at Syracuse University, has written the biography of a real though unidentified urban American high school in the years 1953-1987. He chose "Hamilton," located in a medium-sized northeastern city, because, he says, the school has become "America in microcosm."

In the three decades the book covers, "schools were the major channel the nation chose to bring about a more equal society," Grant observes. "And Hamilton High deserves close examination because these social revolutions have come to maturity there. Unlike many schools," he explains, "Hamilton High has had a diverse population for more than 15 years. We can say 'Here is the future and ask Does it work?'"

And does Hamilton work? Not quite. The social revolutions—which were intended to create more equality for Black, politically radical, handicapped, and non-English-speaking students—have been accomplished. But the way they were accomplished destroyed school's sense of community.

The World We Created at Hamilton High

By Gerald Grant

Harvard. 278 pp. $24.95.

At Hamilton today a "corrosive individualism" tarnishes the school's ethos, the term Grant uses to describe "the enduring values or character of the school community."

Teachers and administrators act toward students on the basis of what is legal—or not illegal—rather than what is right or intellectually supportable. "High expectations and high ideals are ...rare. Cheating is widespread...altruism makes only an occasional visit."

Few public high schools went through the disruptions Hamilton did in the late 1960s. Yet the delegitimization of adult authority that happened there and in other schools where violence occurred has since spread to all public high schools.

How the loss of community happened at Hamilton and what the implications of that loss are for all high schools are the subjects of Grant's book.

If you wanted to reduce the basic 1968-71 Hamilton story to a headline, you couldn't. You'd need two headlines: one from the perspective of the school's new Black students; and one from the perspective of its white students.

From the Black viewpoint you might come up with something like: "'Ham' to Blacks: Drop Dead.'" From the white, maybe "Blacks: Stop Wrecking Our School." Those were the attitudes that grew out of the failure of Hamilton High to make poor Black students—transferred in to achieve state-mandated racial balance—feel that Hamilton was in any sense their school.

The watershed event was a fight between Black and white students in the Hamilton cafeteria in fall 1968. For the next three years, fights, fires, and school closings were everyday events.

Grant uses the term "deconstruction"—apparently borrowed from literary criticism—to describe the sundering of community ties and the disappearance of standards of "right and wrong" that occurred in those years.

In 1971, the violence and disruption finally ended, but to this day the adults at Hamilton have not recovered the authority they once had—by community consensus—to define right and wrong student behavior in school.

Even so, relationships today between Blacks and whites—and much else at Hamilton—have changed for the better. Grant is "thrilled by the sheer vibrancy" of the school's life. Yet Hamilton's environment is still dog-eat-dog—not the best atmosphere for raising future citizens.

So Grant uses his book as a catalyst for recovery and reform. A committee of Hamilton faculty leaders reviewed his manuscript chapter by chapter, then began to identify steps toward making the school a more civilized place.

I wish these Hamilton teachers luck because they are the successors to my old teachers. I was a student at Hamilton in the 1950s, back when nothing new ever happened.

According to Grant, by 1971, 72 percent of the teachers who had been at Hamilton in 1966 had retired, resigned, or transferred out. I'm sure I knew a lot of them.

Grant refers to these white teachers as "the spent objects of the racial revolution," made to "take the rap... for generations of societal racism."

I expect that's true. He says reformers today have amnesia about what happened to schools then. I expect that's true, too. Also true is that not all the teacher victims of "deconstruction" were white. Had Grant looked further south for "deconstructed" high schools—in Washington, D.C., for instance—he would have found "spent objects" who were Black as well.

These teachers were a generation who were in the wrong place at the wrong time—when public officials were willing to let schools turn into war zones.

Anyway I'm glad I don't work in a school any more. In an office building, if anybody even looks funny, we just call the police.

Nancy R. Needham, book review editor, NEA Today; *"Hamilton," '56.*

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TECH TALK

Reach Out, America—Through Your Computer

If you have a computer at home or use one at work, one step will bring you into the telecommunications revolution—and you won't need a second mortgage to do it. For about $100 to $150, you can get that handy little device called a modem (*modulator/demodulator)* and the software to run it.

Right away, you'll be able to transmit computer files and messages through the telephone lines to other computer users with modems—and access thousands of information sources and exchanges.

Former teacher Gary Rackliffe, now project consultant for NEA's Mastery in Learning project at the Stewart Elementary School in Flint, Mich., says, "It's time teachers take advantage of the technology to help break down the isolation of the classroom."

Some teachers are already doing just that, through a new electronic Bulletin Board System (BBS) operated by NEA's Department of Instruction and Professional Development. Through the BBS, they read files and bulletins, use a personal mail service, and transfer files.

The BBS provides weekly news updates with information on legislative developments, as well as on the projects of NEA members across the nation. It also allows access to 30 important documents from the Educational Issues Database on such subjects as AIDS, class size, curriculum standards, and alternative testing.

When you use the BBS, you can print out any information that you read, and send messages for all users or, by using the personal mail service, relay messages to a particular individual.

For further information on this 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week service, call either Pat Martin (202) 822-7375 or Brice Verdier (202) 822-7361 during regular NEA office hours.

Modem users also have access to major data services and data banks such as Compuserve (offering a wide range of services to some 350,000 general users), ERIC (the Educational Resources Information Centers), and GENIE. These services offer everything from specialized bibliographical searches to stock market data. Many university libraries have made their entire card catalogs available via modem.

If you're considering buying a modem, you'll want to comparison shop by checking ads in major computer publications and in newspapers. The industry standard is set by Hayes, so you'll want to be sure that your purchase is Hayes compatible. This means that one of your standard features will be the ability to simultaneously send and receive messages.

You can choose the speed at which information is transmitted (called the baud rate) to balance your initial purchase budget against your need to hold down your phone bill. The transmission speed ranges from 300 to 2,400-baud. A 300-baud modem will cost you about $60; a 2,400-baud machine might cost two to three times that amount. But the faster the information is transmitted, the lower your phone costs will be.

Another important decision is whether to choose an internal or external modem. Sometimes a computer already has an internal modem, which is a circuit board. If you do need a modem, it's wise to get an external one: it will be more durable and you can use it with several computers—at home and at school, for example—provided the phone connections are available. If you choose an external modem, you'll also need a device called an RS-232 serial port to plug into your computer.

New modem convert Jan Perry, a fourth grade teacher at Kimball Elementary School in Seattle, Wash., uses her home computer/modem to take advantage of lower weekend and evening long distance rates. Some school districts limit or don't allow long-distance phone calls, so you should check with administrators first or else plan to communicate exclusively with local BBs.

Even if you stick to local calls, you'll want to check on the times when you and your students can use school phone lines. Ideally, your modem should have a separate line, but that will usually run you about $200 and could cost as much as $2,000 in rural areas.

Probably the best sources for advice on choosing both a modem and software are local computer user groups. In addition to providing their own BBs and free monthly publications in return for a small membership fee, most provide access to shareware and free public domain software. (You get *shareware* free or for the price of a disk; you try it for a period of time to see if it meets your needs, and then, if you like it, you pay $15 to $50 to keep it.)

You can buy commercial software that will activate hardware features like built-in speakers (that let you know when a phone number is misdialed, disconnected, or busy) or warning lights for problem diagnoses. Other software features, like automatic redialling and macros (simplified command sequences) reduce keyboarding.

At NEA's national Mastery in Learning conference in Minneapolis last November, 250 teachers used electronic communications, most of them for the first time. Project research associate Shari Castle reports, "Teachers were so excited they were almost inspired when they were able to talk with each other through the computers. People were on the machines from before breakfast till after midnight."

Doug Tuthill, a high school teacher from St. Petersburg, Fla., and conference participant, concurs, "What's really exciting is that we can envision a day when faculty from across the nation with common interests can talk to each other. We could have nationwide faculty meetings to share concerns and innovations."

—Melissa Etlin

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Esquire	EQ1	17.94	**9.95**	Mother Jones (8 iss)	MJ4	19.20	**15.60**	Us Magazine	UM1	23.95	**14.97**
Essence	ES1	12.00	**9.96**	Motor Trend	MT1	19.94	**9.97**	Video Magazine	VD1	12.00	**6.00**
European Travel & Life	EU1	24.00	**12.00**	Ms.	MS1	16.00	**10.97**	Video Review	VR1	12.00	**7.97**
Express Music Catalog	EM1	9.95	**4.98**	National Lampoon	NL1	15.95	**8.95**	Village Voice	VV1	32.76	**16.50**
Family & Hm Office Cmpting	JF1	19.97	**10.99**	The Nation (24 iss)	NV3	22.50	**9.95**	Walking Magazine	LZ1	12.00	**9.95**
Field & Stream	FS1	15.94	**7.97**	New Woman	XW1	15.00	**9.97**	Weight Watchers	WW1	13.97	**12.97**
Financial World	JW1	44.95	**26.00**	Outdoor Life	OL1	13.94	**8.97**	Working Mother	WI1	12.95	**6.48**
Games	GE1	11.97	**11.97**	Outside	OT1	18.00	**9.97**	Working Woman	WG1	18.00	**9.00**
Golf	GO1	15.94	**9.97**	Parenting	VQ1	18.00	**9.59**	World Press Review	AS1	24.97	**16.97**
Golf Digest (10 iss)	GD4	16.62	**9.98**	PC Magazine (18 iss)	XP4	32.70	**17.95**	Writers Digest (10 mos)	WD4	17.50	**12.47**
Guns & Ammo	GA1	17.94	**9.97**	PC Resource	RP1	24.97	**21.97**	World War II Magazine	UW1	14.95	**14.90**
Harpers Magazine	HM1	18.00	**11.97**	PC Tech Journal	JT1	34.97	**24.97**	Yankee	YA1	‡23.40	**18.00**

‡ Newsstand price. All terms for one year unless otherwise specified. We guarantee your order will be processed at the LOWEST price available from the publisher.

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Your NEA

REACHING OUT

Readersaurus "Egg" Promotes Reading

Help your K-6 students to read more and have fun at the same time by encouraging them to participate in the "summer of the readersaurus," sponsored by Youth PLUS and Reading Is Fundamental. The project is designed to prevent the big loss in reading skills that often plagues children when they're away from the classroom for long periods of time.

Symbolizing the campaign is a fictitious dinosaur egg, reportedly found on the North Slope of Alaska. "Scientists" have determined that this egg will never die because it can *read*. Following a 17-city tour, the egg will come to Washington, D.C., where it will "hatch" on April 29.

By reading three books, students are eligible to enter their names in a nationwide drawing for a variety of prizes—computers, encyclopedias, and more—to be announced. By now, all school principals should have received a mailing about the project. Check with them for more details.

Wanted: Student TV Reporters...

If your high school has equipment and facilities for producing videos, the national daily *USA Today* asks that you look for potential student TV reporters.

A syndicated six-day-a-week TV version of *USA Today* starts next September. The show will be divided into four sections: news, money, sports, and life.

GTG Productions, the show's producer, wants bright, creative, charismatic students capable of putting together videos about their school lives—anything from a mini-documentary about a respected teacher to a humorous look at how to survive a semester of advanced math. Students must still be in school next September and their schools must be willing to act as independent contractors. There will be no compensation.

For information, contact Jim Ackerman or Carrie Cook at GTG EAST, 150 E. 52nd St., New York, NY 10022.

...and Substance-Abuse Prevention Aids

Has your school or community produced materials or curriculums to prevent drug or alcohol abuse? If so, the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP) of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services would like to receive samples. Experts will review submissions for inclusion in an annotated resource list OSAP will distribute.

Send samples and ideas to OSAP Media and Materials Development Support Contract, Macro Systems, Inc., 8630 Fenton St., Suite 300, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

TAKING A STAND

NEA Board OKs Funds Transfer

Under a policy set by the NEA Board of Directors in 1975, NEA must publish every roll-call vote of the Board. There were two such votes at the Feb. 5-6 Board meeting; both were unanimous.

#1: To allocate $200,000 from the NEA's contingency fund to the California Teachers Association (CTA), contingent upon the continued involvement of the NEA regional office in the planning, strategy, and implementation of activities related to CTA's two school funding initiatives.
135 yes, 0 no, 2 nonrespondents, 4 absent (of whom 2 were replaced by alternates).

#2: To grant the request of the West Virginia Education Association for $65,000 from the NEA's contingency fund to assist in the passage of a school revenue initiative; further, that the NEA regional office continue to monitor actual campaign spending and allocate any funds appropriated by NEA with the understanding that additional funds WVEA raises from other sources will reduce the NEA contribution by an equivalent amount.
137 yes, 0 no, 4 absent (of whom 2 were replaced by alternates).

Robert Cornell of Oregon and Ron Bentz of Overseas were not present at the time of vote #1 but requested that their affirmative positions be recorded.

Absentees were Rebecca A. Lee of Alabama, replaced by alternate Peggy Mobley; Linda Pondexter of Arkansas; Alba Lebron de Ayala of Puerto Rico, replaced by Awilda Saldana; and Nita Fields, student.

LOOKING BACK

► *NEA Today* has been publicizing photographs of stranger-abducted children for several years now. You may have noticed that the February issue contained, for the first time, photographs of parentally abducted children.

Two of the parentally abducted children we pictured, seven-year-old Michael Egan, left, and his six-year-old-sister Melissa, have been reunited with their mother after a six-month separation. The children had been abducted by their noncustodial father in Riverside, Calif., and found in Kingman, Ariz. Telephone records gave police the clue to their location.

► Wisconsin's public schools have adopted a new policy on student truancy, called "Learnfare" (Debate, March 1988). Starting last February, teenage mothers and 13- and 14-year-olds whose families receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) will forfeit those benefits if they miss three or more days of school without a legitimate excuse. Benefits will be reinstated if the students return to class and attend school regularly for a month.

Starting next September, *all* teenagers in families receiving AFDC will be required to attend school regularly or risk losing benefits.

Warner Bros.

► Association member Jaime Escalante, a math teacher at Garfield High School in Los Angeles ("Beyond Elitism: Math Literacy for All," Nov. 1987; "All He Needs Is 'Ganas,'" June 1983) is the subject of a new Warner Brothers movie, *Stand and Deliver*. Escalante's unique teaching methods have led his inner-city, predominantly Hispanic students to achieve top scores on the Educational Testing Service's Advanced Placement (AP) calculus exam for the past several years.

The movie, which premiered in Los Angeles last month, stars Edward James Olmos (shown here at left with Escalante) of "Miami Vice."

ARCO Foundation also has honored Escalante by establishing a $25,000 fund that will allow the nonprofit Los Angeles Educational Partnership to grant annual Jaime Escalante Mathematics Teaching Awards. The awards will go to teachers who excel in motivating students, particularly underrepresented minorities, to study advanced mathematics.

► Curtis Sampson, police sergeant in Oklahoma City's school security force, described (in "Kids Who Kill and Are Killed," Feb. 1988) the negative impact on Oklahoma City students—especially in the middle schools—of the more than 50 percent cut in the force's strength.

As the February issue was on press, the school police force's cut went to 100 percent. The Oklahoma City district abolished the entire unit, deciding to let the local city police handle school security.

Education Support Employees-Oklahoma Education Association, Sampson's local unit, filed a court petition on behalf of the police officers, then negotiated an agreement with the school board.

The result: 14 of 20 security officers were assigned to other jobs in the district with no loss in seniority or salary this contract year (seven actually got jobs at higher pay rates). Six officers—including Sampson—resigned and received a resignation bonus.

Doug Hoke

► Due to a proofreading error, the table ranking states by how many minutes of physical education they require per K-12 student career (StateSide, Feb. 1988) incorrectly reported the rankings of three states. The correct state ranking and required p.e. minutes are: Arkansas, 14th, 37,467; Alaska, 38th, 8,100; and Arizona, 43rd (ties with seven other states), 0 minutes.

The U.S. Congress recently passed an NEA-supported resolution encouraging states and local governments to provide quality, daily physical education for all K-12 students.

Other organizations supporting the resolution (H. Con. Res. 97 and S. Con. Res. 43) were: the American Heart Association, American Medical Association, National Association of Elementary School Principals, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American School Health Association, Professional Golfers Association of America, and United States Volleyball Association.

RESOURCES

Idea Exchange

Peers as Personal Pedagogues

Teachers don't always have time to give students the individual help they need—but Melanie Corwin of New Vienna, Ohio, has found a system that provides personal tutoring for all her fourth graders at the New Vienna School: peer study groups.

At the beginning of the year, Corwin pays very close attention to her students in class, at lunch, and at recess as well. Then, when she divides them into groups, she's able to include students with strong interests in different subjects in each group—and to spread out the troublemakers, clowns, and loners, too. That child nobody likes goes into a group with the most warmhearted student Corwin has spotted.

The students in each group get to know one another better by choosing adjectives to describe themselves and discussing these (constructively, Corwin stresses) in the group. Then, to build unity and practice compromise, they choose a name and design a coat of arms for the group.

The peer groups do certain assignments as a group, and group members are always available to lead one another in working out difficulties with individual assignments.

New Books for Old

In rural Bailey, Colo., reading teacher Susan Rhodes-Yenowine found that her seventh graders at the Fitzsimmons Middle School had trouble getting through the mountains to the public library. A classroom library was an obvious alternative, but with funds scarce, how to get the books?

School principal Robert Pritchett had a suggestion: offer to buy students' used books for no more than half the original cost. Each book comes with a recommendation: the original owner writes a one-paragraph synopsis of the book, types it onto an index card, signs it, and glues it inside the front cover of the book.

The system has been working for two years now, with great success. Students like getting checks for their books—and they often spend the money at the school's book fairs. Classroom readers like knowing what a classmate thought of a book before they start reading it. Rhodes-Yenowine is happy to have a growing classroom library. Her principal is happy that the school is getting books worth twice what they cost.

Rhodes-Yenowine suggests that content area teachers ask students to bring in books that can supplement their subject-matter learning.

Writing Packets—From the Experts

When LaNell Stahl was teaching English at James M. Bennett Senior High in Salisbury, Md., her schedule included four "functional writing" classes made up of students who had either failed the state's Functional Writing Test or had been targeted as needing help. The students were bitter at having to attend a year-long class for which the district refused to give them credit.

The first part of the course went well enough, as students came to realize that the class could help them learn to write well enough to pass the test, required for graduation. But after the test, six weeks of class remained, and motivation had dropped to zero.

"Facing fury bordering on rebellion," Stahl says, she came up with a suggestion: students devised and produced

packets of ideas for writing activities—for sale. Stahl selected the 24 best "writing prompts" from each class, while the students selected size of packet, cover design, and group names.

When the packets were completed, Stahl and 24 students set out for Ocean City, some 40 minutes away, to visit the convention of the Maryland Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts (MCTELA). Each student did a two-hour shift in the booth and had the rest of the time free on the boardwalk (with the caution that anyone who messed up would lose his or her share of the profits).

At the end of the day, convention participants had bought 13 packets for a total of $130, and MCTELA invited the students to come back the next year.

Stahl now teaches Chapter 1 Reading, ESL, and Gifted and Talented Enrichment at Seaford (Del.) Middle School. □

RESOURCES

TV/Radio Tips

Animated Classics—*Syndicated, Saturdays; check local listings for time.* Animated adaptations of literary classics. *April 2:* "Robin Hood," *April 9:* "Treasure Island," *April 16:* "Ivanhoe," *April 23:* "Black Beauty," *April 30:* "Prisoner of Zenda."

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner—*National Public Radio; sometime during the first week in April; check local listings for dates and times.* Dramatization of S.T. Coleridge's 18th-century classic by Boston University's Radio Drama Players.

Our Front Porch. "The Last Song of John Proffitt"—*National Public Radio, first and second week of April; check local listings for dates and times.* Remembrances of Dan Emmet (presumed composer of "Dixie") about the rise of Black-face minstrel shows in the South.

American Playhouse—*PBS, Wednesdays, 9-10:30 p.m. ET. April 6:* "Journey into Genius." Drama explaining why the powerful presence of his father haunted Eugene O'Neill throughout his artistic development. *April 13:* "The Rise and Rise of Daniel Rocket." A play based on symbolism: the exceptional person, suburban life, and social mores. *April 20:* "Suspicion." Jane Curtin stars in this updated version of the Alfred Hitchcock thriller.

Afterschool Specials—*ABC-TV, alternate Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m. ET. April 13:* "A Desperate Exit." Rebroadcast. Malcolm-Jamal Warner stars in a drama about suicide. *April 27:* "Teen Father." Rebroadcast. The lives of two unwed teens are changed forever when they become parents.

My Family and Other Animals—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Thursdays 8-8:30 p.m. ET, starting April 14.* Ten-week series based on the book of the same name by naturalist Gerald Durrell about his childhood on the Greek Island of Corfu in the 1930s and his emerging love of wild animals.

The Attic: The Hiding of Anne Frank—*CBS-TV, Sunday, April 17, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Drama retelling the true story of Anne Frank and her family who hid from the Nazis during World War II. Mary Steenburgen and Paul Scofield star.

Schoolbreak Special—*CBS-TV. Tuesday, April 19, 4-5 p.m. ET: "Gangs" (a working title).* A drama exposing gang dynamics. Free viewer's guide available from CBS Educational and Community Services Dept., 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019.

National Geographic Special, "Mysteries of Mankind"—*PBS, Wednesday, April 20, 8 p.m. ET.* The story of the search for human origins. Free study guide available from Chevron, 742 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94710.

ABC-TV

Little Girl Lost—*ABC-TV, Monday, April 25, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Drama based on the true story of a family's fight to adopt a little girl who they believe is being sexually molested by her father. Tess Harper stars.

Don Quixote—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Thursday, April 28, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Mikhail Baryshnikov joins the American Ballet Theater in a performance of this classic Spanish tale.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer—*HBO, starting in April, Sundays 8-8:30 a.m.* ET, *and Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 7:30-8 a.m. ET; check local listings for dates.* A new 48-part animated adventure series based on the book of the same name by Mark Twain.

Marciela—*Disney Channel, sometime in April; check local listings for dates and times.* A teenage refugee from war-torn El Salvador has difficulty adjusting to life in America.

Shakespeare for Every Man—*National Public Radio, sometime in April; check local listings for dates and times.* Actor Ian McKellen provides an entertaining look at the works of Shakespeare.

The Survival Series, "Killers of the Plains"—HBO, sometime in April; *check local listings for dates and times.* Michael Landon narrates this documentary about African wildlife that features scenes of lions, tigers, and wild dogs stalking their prey.

Take Part in America—*NBC-TV, throughout April; check local listings for dates and times.* Public service voter registration campaign announcements using NBC talent. Free viewer's guides for adults and high school seniors available from local NBC stations. □

This month a new prime time weekly drama series, *Aaron's Way*, will premiere on NBC-TV. (Check local listings for dates and times.) The Lorimar television show will deal with the difficulties facing members of an Amish family when they move from the security of a Pennsylvania Amish community to mainstream California. Merlin Olsen, Belinda Montgomery, and Jessica Walter will star.

Study guides for middle and junior high school students have been mailed to junior and senior high schools and to Association members who signed up to be on the NEA viewers' guide list. For more information, call your local NBC station.

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You may choose between the Tandy 1000 TX (Reg. $1199) or the Tandy 1000 SX (Reg. $849). Both provide IBM PC software compatibility, and both provide all the popular audio-display outputs used with school and media center equipment. They also feature a BASICA file on disk, to eliminate bothersome setup changes when education and public domain software is used.

The Tandy 1000 SX is based on the 8088 microprocessor, and features a built-in 5¼" disk drive. The 1000 TX is based on the powerful 80286 microprocessor, and features a built-in 3½" disk drive. In many computer applications, the TX operates faster than the IBM 25/30.

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With the addition of the Trackstar 128 board, you can use Apple® II software as well as MS-DOS software. You'll have the best of both worlds—the ability to use existing Apple software, as well as the ability to use the MS-DOS titles used throughout business and education. (Installation is required. The Tandy 1000 TX requires an optional 5¼" disk drive.)

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Title: _____

School District: _____

School Telephone Number: _____

School Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

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Signature _____

Supervisor Statement

As duly-authorized by the above-named institution, I certify that the educator named on this form is an employee of this institution.

Name: _____

Representative Title: _____

Signature: _____

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In order to introduce you to NIE Life Insurance. . .a program designed exclusively for NEA members, we've made enrolling easier than ever. In fact, just two simple steps can qualify you for up to $50,000 of protection (Schedule 50), depending on your age. You can enroll right now if you can certify "TRUE" to the two simple health statements on the easy Enrollment Form on the next page. Even if you can only answer "TRUE" to Statement 1, you still *qualify automatically for as much as $10,000* of coverage under Schedule 1. But you must complete and mail your NIE Life Insurance Enrollment Form before the Deadline Date indicated in order to take advantage of this limited-time offer. It's the quick and easy way to get the additional life insurance you may need and take advantage of all these valuable NEA members-only benefits. The NIE Life Insurance Plan is decreasing term insurance, which means benefits are higher in your younger years, when your needs tend to be the greatest. Benefits gradually decrease as you get older, when your children may be out on their own, and your protection needs are generally less.

2 Guaranteed eligibility for NEA members

As long as you are an Active, Educational Support, Retired, Life, Substitute, Student or Staff NEA member in good standing, you *are automatically eligible* to enroll for NIE Life Insurance. Once issued, your coverage will continue for as long as you remain eligible, you continue to make the required contributions within two months of each due date, and as long as the overall plan remains in effect. Even if you retire, you can still continue your NIE Life Insurance Plan, as long as you remain an NEA-R member.

Should you ever become ineligible under the plan, you are *guaranteed the right to convert your coverage* within two calendar months to one of a number of Prudential individual policies—*without a medical exam or any proof of good health.* Furthermore, if you should die during this two-month period, your insurance will be paid to the beneficiary you choose whether or not you have applied for an individual policy.

You may *choose anyone you wish* to receive the proceeds from your life insurance, and you may *change your choice of beneficiary at any time.*

3 No medical exam

You *do not need to take a medical exam* in order to qualify for NIE Life Insurance. In fact, right now you may qualify for as much as $50,000 of protection as easily as certifying "TRUE" to two simple health statements. And even if you cannot do so, coverage may still be available. Just send in your Enrollment Form anyway, and we'll mail you an expanded Enrollment Form with additional health questions. Your answers to these questions, if acceptable to the underwriter, are the basis for providing coverage under the program.

4 A company you can trust

Underwritten by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, a company known for quality service and financial responsibility for over a century, the NEA Life Insurance Program has provided NEA members with quality term life insurance at affordable rates since 1961. The NEA Life Insurance Program is administered by the NEA Members Insurance Trust, a qualified group of members concerned with the special needs and best interests of NEA members.

5 Affordable group rates

As an NEA member you are eligible to apply for NIE protection at *reasonable group rates*, rates which may be *lower than you could get for similar coverage individually.* In fact, our rate schedules have recently been revised to provide you with *even greater long-term savings.*

Here are your revised rates for Plan Schedules 1 and 50:

	NIE SCHEDULE 1		NIE SCHEDULE 50†	
Age*	Coverage	Semiannual Contribution**	Coverage	Semiannual Contribution**
Under 30	$10,000	$ 6.00	$50,000	$ 26.00
30-34	$10,000	$ 6.50	$50,000	$ 28.50
35-39	$10,000	$ 7.00	$50,000	$ 31.00
40-44	$10,000	$12.50	$50,000	$ 58.50
45-49	$10,000	$15.00	$50,000	$ 71.00
50-54	$ 6,000	$19.30	$30,000	$ 92.50
55-59	$ 6,000	$24.00	$30,000	$116.00
60-64	$ 4,000	$29.60	$20,000	$144.00
65-69	$ 4,000	$36.00	$20,000	$176.00
70 & Over	$ 1,000	$32.00	$ 5,000	$156.00

Policy Form GRP 31300 GEN AS5-704

*Age of member at time of claim.

**Based on age of member on each due date. Contributions and coverage may change as member enters a higher age category.

† Optional spouse and dependent's coverage (normally available under Schedule 50) is not available with this special offer.

6 Personal service

Our specially trained member services representatives are always available to answer your questions, before or after you apply. Just *call toll free—1-800-523-5877—* between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. EST weekdays.

7 Additional protection available

If you need additional insurance, or spouse and dependent children's coverage, your Association offers a choice of plans with *coverage up to $200,000* (amounts vary with age and schedule selected). To find out about it, please call our toll free number during the times designated above.

8 Annual Bonus Coverage

Earn an additional $100 of coverage for every year you maintain your NIE coverage—at no extra cost to you! You can get up to a lifetime maximum of *$2,500.* Once you retire or reach age 62, this valuable bonus coverage will be yours to keep—even if you cancel your NIE protection—as long as you remain an NEA member. You'll be guaranteed additional protection you may need in your later years *without having to pay a penny!* However, if you discontinue your NIE coverage before you retire or reach age 62, your Annual Bonus Coverage will be cancelled and will start accumulating anew if you reinstate or enroll again for coverage.

9 No-cost coverage during total disability

If, as an insured member under age 60, you become totally disabled for at least six months, NEA's Members Insurance Trust will pick up your contribution. This way, your scheduled member *coverage will remain in effect* for the remainder of the period of total disability without further payments from you, as long as proof of disability is furnished as required. And if you should die during the first 12 months of such disability, your insurance will be paid to your beneficiary even if you have not furnished such proof or if contributions were not continued.

To be considered totally disabled, you must not be able to perform any and every duty pertaining to your occupation and not be engaged in any gainful work. However, after the 30th month of such disability, you must be unable to engage in any occupation for which you are reasonably fitted by education, training or experience, and not be engaged in any gainful work.

10 14-day, no-risk examination of coverage

There's no need to send any money now. Simply complete the Enrollment Form below and return it to NEA Life. Your group term life insurance will become effective on the first day of the month following approval by Prudential. Upon acceptance, Prudential will bill you and your Certificate of Coverage will be mailed to you. If you are in any way dissatisfied with your protection, you may return your Certificate of Coverage and thereby cancel your coverage *within 14 days* after receiving it and any initial contribution you made will be returned to you.

Be sure to mail back your easy Enrollment Form before June 15, 1988 to qualify for up to $50,000 of term life insurance under the terms of this limited-time, easy enrollment offer.

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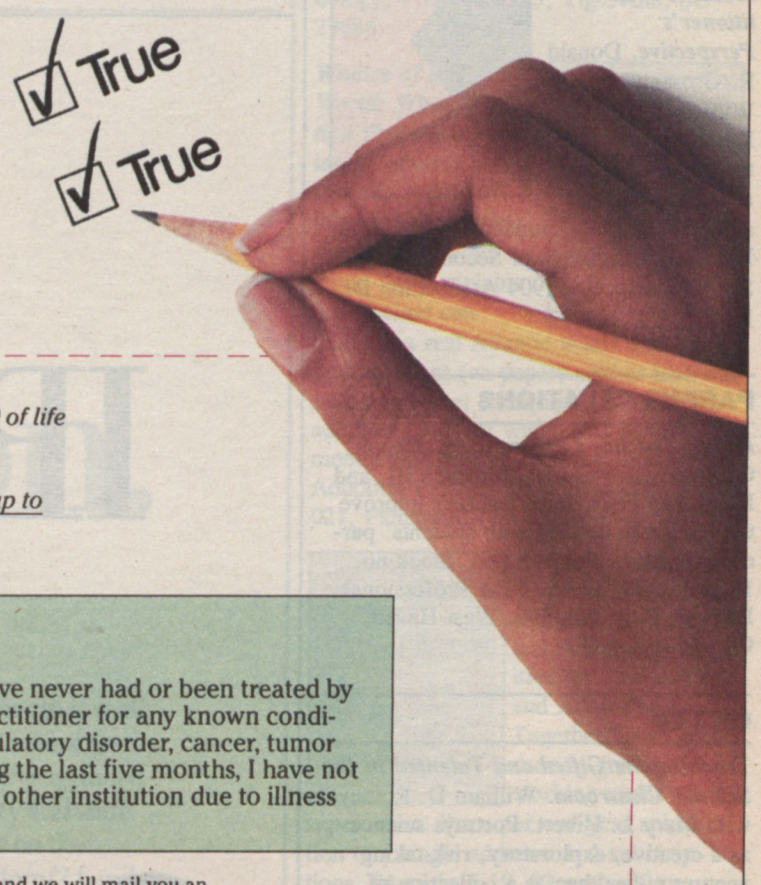

- *If you can answer "TRUE" to Statement 1, you automatically qualify for up to $10,000 of life insurance under Schedule 1.*
- *If you can answer "TRUE" to both Statements 1 and 2, you automatically qualify for up to $50,000 of life insurance under Schedule 50.*

Statement 1
☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE
I am now physically able to perform all the duties of my occupation, and I am working on a full-time basis. (This requirement not applicable to Student and Retired members).

Statement 2
☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE
During the last five years, I have never had or been treated by a doctor or other licensed practitioner for any known condition of the heart or other circulatory disorder, cancer, tumor or diabetes. In addition, during the last five months, I have not been confined in a hospital or other institution due to illness for more than five days.

NOTE: Even if you answered "FALSE," coverage may still be available. Send in your Enrollment Form and we will mail you an expanded Enrollment Form with additional health questions.

CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL OF PROTECTION:

Please enroll me in the New Independent Educators (NIE) Life Insurance Plan which I have indicated below.

☐ Schedule 1: $10,000 of coverage

☐ Schedule 50: $50,000 of coverage

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Month Date Year

BENEFICIARY (Example: Mary A. Doe, NOT Mrs. John Doe)

_____
First Middle Last Relationship

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Address City State Zip

☐ I am not currently insured under any NEA Life Insurance Plan.

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Plan Name _____ Identification Number _____

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SEND NO MONEY NOW. For your convenience, you will be billed the amount indicated in the rate schedule for the coverage you have selected. The amount of your contribution will be based on your age at the time your coverage will go into effect. Coverage goes into effect on the first of the month following approval of your Enrollment Form by Prudential.

I declare that the statements and answers are complete and true and understand that they are the basis for providing insurance under a policy(ies) issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America to the NEA Members Insurance Trust.

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☐ I would like information about higher levels of coverage, and spouse and dependent children's coverage.

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RESOURCES

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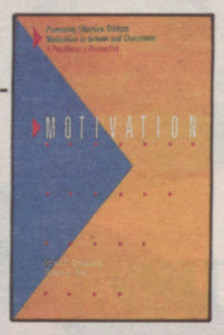
PEDAGOGY

New Dimensions on Class Size and Academic Achievement. Susan Bennett. Describes studies that have established a link between certain kinds of student success and class size. 17 pp. $5. By check or purchase order to Center Document Service, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, Rm. 242, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1025 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706.



Promoting Effective Student Motivation in School and Classroom: A Practitioner's Perspective. Donald R. Grossnickle and William B. Thiel. Describes ways teachers can assess and improve their ability to motivate students. 72 pp. $6. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1904 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091.

PARENT RELATIONS

Parent-Teacher Conferencing. Joseph C. Rotter, Edward H. Robinson III, and Mary Ann Fey. Helps teachers improve their skills in dealing with students' parents. Second edition. 32 pp. Stock no. 1075-2-00-D. $2.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

GIFTED

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Science Classroom. William D. Romey with Mary L. Hibert. Portrays science as a creative, exploratory, risk-taking venture rather than as a collection of facts. Second edition, including new hands-on activities. 64 pp. Stock no. 0748-4-00-D. $7.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

MEMORIAL DAY

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Poster. Full-color poster from a watercolor of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. 20½" x 19⅛". $10 plus $2.50 p&h prepaid. Joanne Wasserman, Wasserman Design, 1511 K St., N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005.

STUDY SKILLS

"Learn How To Learn" Study Skills. Herman Ohme. Shows secondary students how to develop such learning skills as managing time, taking notes, answering test questions. 162 pp. plus supplements. Text and exercises are reproducible for classroom use. $9.95 to NEA members, plus $1.50 p&h. Includes free 23-page teacher guide. California Education Plan, 4000 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303.

MEDIA

TV News & Children. Suggests ways adults—including both parents and teachers—can help children interpret TV news, as well as encourage the television industry to improve its broadcast menu for children. 25 pp. $5. Action for Children's Television, 20 University Rd., Cambridge, MA 02138.

HEALTH

Let's Face It. Kit—developed by Ortho Pharmaceutical Corp.—with reproducible student activities and a video about good skin care habits. Grades 9-12. Free. *Let's Face It* Coordinator, Manning, Selvage & Lee, Inc., 79 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Adapting Instructional Materials for Mainstreamed Students. Issue Brief from ERIC/OSEP Special Project on Interagency Information. 20 pp. Free. Ask also for free Publications List, which covers research summaries and issue briefs (both free) and directories of ongoing research ($3-$5 each) in special education. ERIC/OSEP Special Project, Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Dr., Reston VA 22091.

COUNSELING/HEALTH

Girls Are Great (physical and psychological well-being, # 26-822); ***Into the World of Today and Tomorrow*** (opportunities in science and technology, # 26-823); ***Reaching Out*** (suicide prevention, # 26-824); ***Staying Safe*** (child abuse, # 26-821); ***Tune In to Well-Being, Say No to Drugs*** (drug abuse, # 26-820). Booklets for adults working with girls K-12 on the

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RESOURCES

topics indicated. About 20 pp. each. $1 each. To order, prepay and give catalog number listed above. Minimum order, $7.50; for orders under $10 add $p&h; for orders $10 or over, add 10 percent of order for p&h to $7.50 maximum. (Residents of CA, GA, and MD add sales tax.) Girl Scouts of U.S.A., National Equipment Service, 830 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022.

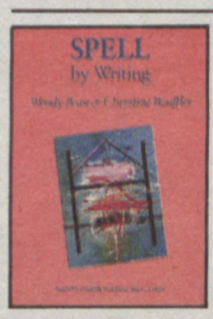
READING

10 Ways To Help Your Children Become Better Readers. A brochure that suggests ways parents can improve their children's reading and recommends a reading list for parents themselves. 4 pp. Single copies, free. Box of 50, $17.50. (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI, add sales tax.) Make check payable to University of Illinois—BNR Brochures. Becoming a Nation of Readers—Brochures, P.O. Box 2774, Station A, Champaign, IL 61820-8774.

DRUG ABUSE

Solving Alcohol/Drug Problems in Your School. Gary L. Anderson. Describes characteristics of both successful and unsuccessful antidrug programming in schools and includes a survey you can use to help determine where your school lies on the "success-unsuccess" continuum. 32 pp. Order #081. Johnson Institute, 7151 Metro Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55435-3425 (1-800-231-5165).

SPELLING/WRITING



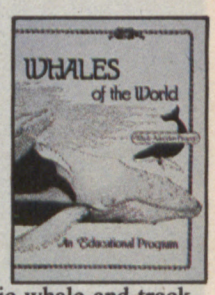
Spell by Writing. Wendy Bean and Chrystine Bouffler. Two Australian teachers describe "process writing" as an integrated approach to teaching beginning reading, writing, and spelling. 92 pp. Primary English Teaching Association [Australia]. Available for $9 plus $1.50 p&h (prepaid) from Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 70 Court St., Portsmouth, NH 03801.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Innovative Teaching Methods in Social Studies Through Learning Center Approaches. Joyce P. Moody. 67 pp. Presents some 140 social studies tasks—in such areas as careers, presidents, map skills—that students can work at independently. K-12. 67 pp. $6.95 prepaid to Joyce P. Moody, 716 E. Wesleyan Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282.

SCIENCE

Science Projects: A Modular Approach. Mike Farmer. A step-by-step manual for developing successful science projects, including description of computer software appropriate for displaying experimental results. Designed for high school students; adaptable by teachers for younger students. 52 pp. $7.50 each; lots of 20, $5 each. Ask for free list of 100 science project ideas. Applied Educational Technology, P.O. Box 193, Tigerville, SC 29688.



Whales of the World: Whale Adoption Project. Teaching kit about whales contains reproducible student activity sheets and teacher's guide—also explains how a class can "adopt" a real Atlantic whale and track its migrations (on paper; neither tank nor seagoing vessel is required!). Kit, free; adoption, $15 per whale (but send no money until you've seen the kit). Whale Adoption Project, 320 Gifford St., Dept. 021, Falmouth, MA 02540.

WonderScience. A quarterly magazine—subtitled "Fun Physical Science Activities for Children and Adults To Do Together"—for children in grades 4-6 working under adult supervision. Price per one-year subscription to a single address: 1-4 subscriptions, $4 each; 5-19, $3 each; 20 or more, $2 each. Purchase orders acceptable on orders of 20 or more; otherwise prepay. WonderScience, American Chemical Society, P.O. Box 57136, West End Station, Washington, DC 20037.

IFOs

***Aerobie* Science and *Aerobie* P.E. Packets.** Separate science and P.E. packets use the Aerobie flying ring—which can be thrown more than twice as far as a Frisbee—to teach, respectively, aerodynamics and aerobic fitness and coordination. Individual packets are free to high school teachers who write on school stationery (specify science or p.e. packet). Superflight, Inc., 81 Encina Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301.

The "Free or Inexpensive" feature is included in *NEA Today* as a service to readers. Items listed are selected by the editors at their discretion from review copies submitted by publishers. Since this column is editorial matter rather than advertising, there is no charge for listings.

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Through the IBM classroom network, the teacher's computer can be linked to each student's. This, in turn, allows the teacher to give each student specific instructions, as well as distribute the day's work electronically. Also, the teacher knows which program a student is using and how fast they're working.

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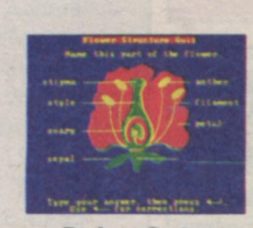
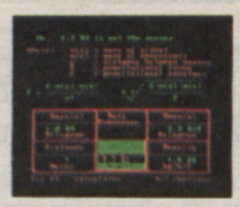


Biology Series



Physics Series

The IBM network helps students get right to work on the right subjects, and advance at their own pace.

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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Sun Worshipers, Beware

An American tradition is fading away, and with good reason. While getting a deep tan was once the major goal of every summer vacation, the word is out: the sun can be hazardous to your health.

The biggest worry is skin cancer. Last year over half a million cases were diagnosed—except for lung cancer, cancer of the skin is the only cancer that's becoming more common. As recently as 1982, your chance of developing some form of the disease during your lifetime was one in 250. Today it's one in 135, and by the year 2000 it's predicted to be one in 90. Even more ominously, doctors are now seeing cancerous skin lesions on people who are only in their 20's.

Researchers aren't sure exactly what's causing this sudden increase. Some blame the environment, diet, or depletion of the ozone layer. But the chief culprit is thought to be overexposure to the sun. Besides the cancer worries, the sun is also known to cause premature aging of the skin, a suppression of the immune system, and often a nasty burn. No wonder becoming a bronzed god or goddess isn't as popular as it used to be.

As people become more aware of the sun's harmful effects, manufacturers have been quick to flood the market with a bewildering variety of skin products. You can buy "sun screens," "sun blocks," "anti-wrinkle sun cremes," and "ultra-protection skin cancer guards." There are lotions for your body, your face, your lips, your nose, and even your bald spot. And most come with a "Protection Factor" (PF) rating somewhere between "1" and "34."

PF ratings tell you how many hours it will take to get the equivalent of one unprotected hour in the sun. In other words, a rating of "4" means you can stay out for four hours and get the same tan—or burn—you would have gotten in one hour with no lotion.

Since the Food and Drug Administration regulates PF ratings, different brands with the same rating are equally effective—so choose among them based on price, smell, and feel. Also keep in mind that PFs higher than "15" are mostly marketing gimmicks. Ten hours in the sun with a "15" is like 40 unprotected minutes. Switch to a "24" and you've only avoided the equivalent of 15 minutes of exposure!

Here are some other tips for avoiding the sun's harmful effects.

► There's no such thing as "good" or "bad" ultraviolet rays (the rays that tan and burn). Since a tan is your body's way of protecting itself from harmful radiation, anything that tans your skin is damaging it. Tanning salons are no safer than sunlight—and can be worse if you overuse them.

► Some doctors suggest applying sun screen 15 minutes *before* you go out to ensure maximum effectiveness. Read the label.

► Reapply a sun screen often, even if it's waterproof.

► Remember that the sun is strongest around noon and is also strongest in high altitudes and near the equator.

► Ultraviolet rays can penetrate clouds and loosely woven clothing. Some synthetics let over 90 percent of the radiation through. □

Crash Diets: Why They Don't Work

Decided you have to lose 10 pounds before you dare show yourself on the beach? Starving yourself for a few weeks may pay off initially, but research shows that in the long run it could give you an even tubbier physique.

The body stores fat for a very good reason. Our ancestors' problem was very different from ours: starvation. Scientists are discovering we have a survival mechanism that protects against the effects of famine—and frustrates the crash dieter.

When deprived of sufficient calories, your body loses weight at first—but within a few weeks, your metabolism slows down to conserve energy. Worse, it starts hoarding fat, even breaking down muscles instead. This explains why most dieters hit a weight-loss "plateau" after some early success.

When you stop dieting and start eating normally again, your new, slower metabolism is much more efficient at converting food to fat. And, for extra measure, your body tries to add a few extra pounds to its original weight as insurance against the next "famine."

Each time you diet, your body becomes more proficient at this cycle. Eventually, it can switch to its famine mode in days rather than weeks.

The only way to lose weight without panicking your body into this famine reaction is to take things gradually. Your goal is to fool your body into burning up its precious reserves of fat.

The rule of thumb is to consume at least 10 calories daily for each pound of body weight. In other words, if you weigh 130 pounds, your diet should provide at least 1,300 calories per day. For most people, this is enough to keep the body from feeling it's in danger of starvation. (This rule of thumb only works for those who want to lose just a few pounds. If you're seriously overweight, it may provide too many calories. Check with your doctor.)

To lose weight successfully, you should also increase your level of physical activity and change your eating habits. Even moderate increases in exercise—walking an extra mile a day or taking the steps instead of the elevator—will add up over time. And simple diet changes like baking rather than frying chicken and replacing your morning doughnut with a piece of fruit also will have a long-term effect. □

Don't Overdo The Exertion

Too much exercise too soon can be worse than not enough. If you're just starting aerobic activities, there's a simple way you can keep from overexerting yourself.

First, determine your resting heart rate. Take your pulse several mornings before you get out of bed and find the average number of beats per minute. Then apply this formula to find your *target* heart rate:

Add your age and your resting heart rate
Subtract from 220
Multiply by 0.6
Add to resting heart rate.

For example, if you're a 38-year-old with a resting heart rate of 70, your formula would work out like this:

38 plus 70 = 108
220 minus 108 = 112
112 x 0.6 = 67.2
67.2 plus 70 = 137
(your target rate)

Your goal in exercise should be to stay at your target rate—without exceeding it—for at least 20 minutes three times a week.

If you have any medical problems, or are in very poor shape, you should see your doctor for a physical before beginning any exercise program. □

Overweight? Where?

The National Center for Health Statistics reports that 50 percent of American women say they go on a diet two or more times a year. Men can't be far behind.

While obesity is a major health problem, are that many of us really *too* fat? Probably not. Nutritionists say many dieting Americans aren't obese, they're just dissatisfied with their body size or shape. And there's a difference.

Recent research indicates it's possible to be "fat" according to the standards of fashion and the ubiquitous height/weight tables, and yet be just as healthy as people with normal weight. Specifically, there appears to be little or no correlation between fat stored *below* the waist and the medical complications usually associated with obesity. The pear shape—large hips, thighs, and buttocks—doesn't seem to be anything more than an appearance problem.

Fat that accumulates *above* the waist, on the other hand, is more dangerous. "The man at highest risk of coronary artery disease is the guy with no buns at all and a big gut hanging over his belt," says Dr. Wayne Callaway, director of the Center for Clinical Nutrition at the George Washington University Medical School in Washington, D.C.

Men and women with big bellies, shoulders, and breasts run a risk of diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers that can be 15 to 20 times greater than normal—*even if their overall weight is within the acceptable range.* □

Letters

Student Press Rights

Goodbye to aggressive, teen issues–oriented scholastic journalism. Given the broad censorship powers that high school principals now have thanks to the January Supreme Court decision, news coverage and editorial comment on "sensitive issues" will indeed be rare.

Censorship or the threat of censorship creates an ominous atmosphere not only for high school journalists and their student peers, but also for all those concerned about the search for the truth.

Jim Pilewski,
Kirtland, Ohio

Taking Issue

In response to Katie Johnson's review of Gerald Coles' *The Learning Mystique* in the March Issue, I as a professional special educator, question her views.

As a teacher, Johnson would be aware of the fallacy of making absolute statements, yet she writes that Coles' book "will...infuriate the entire learning disabilities establishment."

Ms. Johnson is apparently unaware that the entire learning disabilities establishment hardly speaks with one voice. There is, in fact, a sizable minority that agrees with the idea that minimal brain dysfunctions (organic impairments) are not the sole cause of learning disabilities.

I am a teacher within a school district that operates its special education programs on the basis that lack of performance of academic tasks is the main indicator of a learning disability. Our district is a member of a regional special education cooperative that also operates according to this indicator. I received my training at a state university where the learning disabilities program operates to a large extent according to the interaction theory.

As to Ms. Johnson's contention that learning disabilities may be "an education house built on sand," I submit that I and my colleagues in special education are, for the most part, working with students who demonstrate a lack of performance in academic subjects. They may be better classified as slow learners, as disadvantaged learners, or as at-risk learners. But it is a fact that they are present in our student population and that they have the right to an adequate education. We have the responsibility to educate them.

I do not believe we are spending our time playing in the sand.

Warren Sandmann
Northome, Minnesota

Review Revisited

An editorial change significantly altered my review of Michael Katz' *Reconstructing American Education* in the February issue. After mentioning Diane Ravitch's criticism of Katz and his fellow revisionist historians, I wrote that in this volume "Katz counterattacks vigorously and effectively." The editor changed this to read: "Katz counterattacks vigorously but not quite effectively." The change completely reversed my judgment.

I do believe that Katz puts too much effort into a futile effort to resurrect failed alternatives. Arguing for "what might have been" too often involves wishful thinking. But Katz' work in social history has been very valuable. His explanations of what actually happened have greatly enriched our understanding of how the schools came to be the way they are. And Katz has the better of the argument with Diane Ravitch.

David Macleod,
Mount Pleasant, Michigan

Ed note: We regret our misinterpretation of Dr. Macleod's point.

Russian Revelations

I was pleased to read the article by Don Cameron about the Soviet Union in the February issue. I also visited the Soviet Union last August and September for three weeks. I was on a tour sponsored by Educators for Social Responsibility. We visited five cities and were present in Leningrad for the opening day of school at a vocational high school. We visited a day care center in Odessa and a Pioneer Palace in Minsk. We met and socialized with teachers and administrators.

Everywhere we met Soviet people, I was impressed with their level of intellectual and cultural development as well as their strong dedication to and concern for world peace.

From my visit, I have concluded that the Soviet Union is not a wealthy country. It has kept pace with the arms race at great cost to its people. The absence of commercialization seems to have allowed the people to develop a different aspect of their character. Education is highly revered, along with the arts and intellectual thought.

I believe that most of the information that we are given by the press about the Soviet Union is misleading. How many Americans know that this year the Soviet Union is celebrating 1,000 years of Christianity's presence in the country?

Thank you for your attempt to educate our members with a more realistic picture of the USSR and its citizens. It is terribly frightening to think that our two countries have the capability to destroy the world. Peace is the only alternative!

Sandra LaFramboise,
Concord, Calif.

TV and Children

I am amazed at your failure to comment on television's menace to children everywhere ("From Our Miss Brooks to Bronx Zoo," Feb.)

Schools and teachers will not face the fact that television causes most of our educational problems. Youngsters 2 to 11 years of age watch TV for 30 or more hours a week. This means they're robbed of thousands of hours of normal mental growth activities. This time loss causes retardation of normal mental growth potential and is a causal factor in school failure and dropout.

The educator's role should be to warn parents of TV's invisible menace to children's well-being. It is not *what* children watch but the time taken from "better" things to do that is so insidious.

Justin H. Wenger
San Diego, California

More Timewasters

If only we had 180 days for teaching (Sounding Board, Feb.)—oh, yes! If only! As a high school art teacher, I would like to add a third time-stealer: maintenance.

In addition to all the distractions Dorothy Kelly listed, we have to perform regular maintenance, inventory, and repair, and to order hundreds of supplies and tools for tempera painting, silkscreen printing, watercolor, ceramics (clay and glazes), weaving, wood carving, lino printing, acrylics, papier mache, and art history.

In addition, there are the regular duties such as kiln loading, daily clay room cleanup, displays and shows, and assistance to other school activities. Meanwhile the entire area is expected to be kept as clean as any other classroom, including the walls, sinks, and floors, which we wet-mop at the end of each week. Less than perfect performance is reflected on the teacher's administrative evaluation.

Leonard S. Irwin
Lindenwold, New Jersey

Military Medals

If you are one of the 200,000 to 300,000 Association members who are veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, and you never received medals to which you were entitled, you can now obtain them. If you lost or misplaced your medals, you can order duplicates.

For a free brochure on how to obtain medals never issued and for a list of dealers who can supply most lost medals, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Korean Veterans International, P.O. Box 52033, Tulsa, OK 74152.

Jack Walsh
Cumberland, Wisconsin
Chair, Legislative Committee
NEA Veterans Caucus

Competition/Cooperation

The February debate on competition vs. cooperation is superfluous. In life, as in the microcosm of life, the classroom, it is vital to be proficient in both cooperating and competing.

However, there is research suggesting it is vital to know when each goal structure is most productive for mastery of a particular goal. Competition in the classroom is beneficial only if each learner has an equal opportunity to be the winner. Examples of this are games of luck or competition in homogeneously grouped situations. Without an equal possibility of being a winner, the loser may develop a negative self-image. Survival of humankind depends on cooperation, so the teacher should incorporate cooperative goals into the curriculum.

Do teacher training programs and in-service days instruct teachers in appropriately choosing cooperative or competitive goal structures or are teachers again expected to intuitively know this?

Barbara Levin Epstein
Havertown, Pennsylvania

New Math?

Apparently none of the 20 teachers, administrators, and educational support workers (People, Feb.) who won the $9 million in their state lottery is a math teacher if they expect only "about $6,000 a year for the next 20 years, after taxes."

Divided among 20 people, $9 million provides $450,000 each. $450,000 divided into 20 annual payments equals $22,500 per person per year. Receiving only $6,000 out of $22,500 indicates a tax rate of over 70 percent.

Is this correct?

Richard Siegelman
Oyster Bay, New York

Linda Mann, one of the winners, responds: There were actually three winning tickets in the $9 million lottery. As holders of one of those tickets, our share was $3 million.

Supply and Demand

As I understand the free enterprise system, the price structure is determined by the law of supply and demand.

For example, more than 50 major league baseball players each earned at least $1 million in 1987. They earned that much because nobody else can do what they do. Doctors earn big bucks because nobody can do what they do (or read what they write); lawyers, because few can do what they do and no one can understand what they write.

But public school teachers are a different matter. Most of us have experienced the classroom through 12 years of public schooling. We can all do what teachers do, and everyone not only can read what teachers write, but we can understand what they write.

Good teachers make their jobs look so easy, we all think we can do them. It's a case of the law of supply and demand—real or imagined.

Joe Romeo
Uniontown, Ohio

Why Teach?

Despite the shortcomings in salary, despite the stress of classroom management, and despite the current lack of status for teaching, few other jobs offer the satisfaction of teaching young people.

I teach for four reasons: the job is a crucial one, I enjoy it, I feel that I do a good job, and it meets my schedule as no other job could.

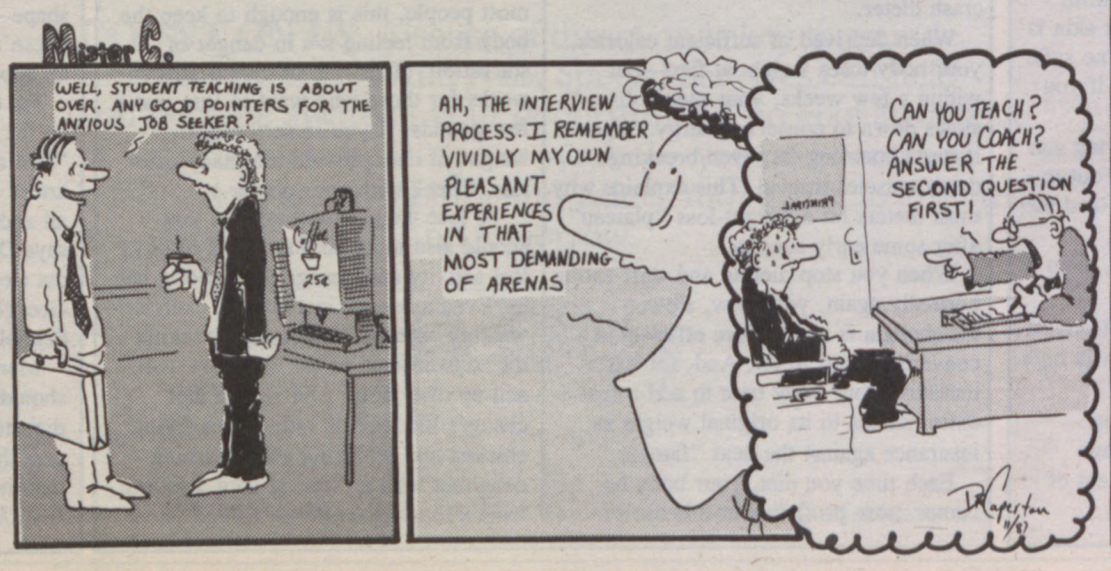
In a sense, my job is the opposite of a farmer's. A farmer works in the summer, then repairs his tools over the winter so that he can continue farming the next year.

Teachers have the opposite schedule. We do those things in the summer, such as extra courses or a second job, that allow us to continue teaching.

Who would want to be a teacher?

Who *wouldn't* want to be a teacher?

Stuart Deane
Newburyport, Massachusetts


Mister B.
WELL, STUDENT TEACHING IS ABOUT OVER. ANY GOOD POINTERS FOR THE ANXIOUS JOB SEEKER?
Coffee 25¢
AH, THE INTERVIEW PROCESS. I REMEMBER VIVIDLY MY OWN PLEASANT EXPERIENCES IN THAT MOST DEMANDING OF ARENAS
CAN YOU TEACH? CAN YOU COACH? ANSWER THE SECOND QUESTION FIRST!
DCaperton 11/87

This month's cartoon comes from David Caperton, an English teacher and Association rep at Hamilton Township High School south of Columbus, Ohio.

What's *your* opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their colleagues around the nation. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Are we overdiagnosing 'learning disabilities' in our students?

Bob Herbert

YES

Bob Nieder has worked with learning disabled, trainable, and severely mentally handicapped students for the past 10 years. He's currently teaching learning disabled, socially and emotionally maladjusted, and educable mentally handicapped first and second graders at Carrie Downie Elementary School in New Castle, Del.

Prior to the 1975 passage of Public Law 94-142—mandating education of the handicapped in "the least restrictive environment"—parents of children with specific learning disabilities had to look beyond the public schools to find programs that met their children's needs. They formed effective parent support and advocacy groups that helped develop some excellent private programs.

Private alternatives were expensive, however, and a financial burden on most families. The solution lay in public education, but lawmakers were hard to convince. Finally, after many years, Congress passed P.L. 94-142, assuring all children access to a free public education. With the law, however, came new problems.

As with any federally funded program, states must follow guidelines. In turn, states create regulations for local districts, and districts establish procedures for schools to meet.

In Delaware, where I teach, every school goes through a monumental paper chase each year to establish firmly its number of special education students. That figure is important because it determines the special ed funding the school will receive: the higher the number, the higher the funding.

Such a system asks for abuse. For example, ten years ago an administrator at the school where I taught confronted our special education staff, explaining that he needed two more special ed students to get the money the school needed. He directed us to "find" these students.

To do so, we had to accelerate our placement procedure from one month to one week. The students we identified might have been placed in the program anyway, but because of the short time frame they were robbed of their right to due process.

Teachers should be cautious about labeling a student "learning disabled." Criteria for identifying a student vary so much from state to state that, even with the same test results, a child can be classified as learning disabled in one state and not in another.

Happily, Delaware did enact a new placement policy last September, requiring special ed teachers to provide conclusive data before classifying a child as learning disabled. While I'm not thrilled with the additional paperwork, I'm glad we have to be more accountable.

My suspicions of overdiagnosis were reinforced recently when the Council for Exceptional Children reported that the percentage of students identified as learning disabled is greater than the combined percentages of all the other handicaps!

A colleague of mine feels that labeling students doesn't matter. "We can call kids 'turtles' as long they get the services they need," she argues. I disagree. Labeling carries a stigma. Some teachers can't see beyond them.

I feel we educators need to develop a more precise definition of "learning disabled"—one that's practical and understandable to parents. It should cease to be an umbrella term.

We need to convince both parents and teachers that placing a child in a special education class may not be the right thing to do. Many times the problem lies with the situation or the environment rather than with the student. It's a good idea not only to consider—but to exhaust—other alternatives first.

We also need to put the needs of the student above the needs of the school. Federal and state governments can help us do this by developing a more equitable way of distributing funds.

Most important of all, we need to establish a classroom environment that allows for the individual needs of each student. Then, together with parent advocacy groups, we can work to meet the specific needs of all students, including the learning disabled. □

Louis Rivera, Jr.

NO

Stewart Adams, a special education teacher for 16 years, works with students at Edison Junior High in Rock Island, Ill. He's a member of the Illinois Education Association Board of Directors, the governor's Advisory Council for the Education of the Handicapped, and the state's Higher Education Advisory Council.

Since the passage of Public Law 94-142, school districts across the country have been creating and revising special education programs to meet the needs of handicapped students. As a result, the number of students diagnosed as learning disabled has grown. Federal and state regulations ensure that each of these placements is justified.

The federal laws are specific, yet general enough to allow for interpretation by each state. They stipulate that children can be classified as learning disabled only after a team of certified experts prepares a case study documenting their needs, strengths, and level of functioning. Such a student must be average or above average in intelligence as measured by norm-referenced tests but suffer from impairments in one or more of the following: sensory perception, motor skills, speech, writing ability, attention, and memory.

The required testing identifies discrepancies between a student's learning ability and actual classroom achievement. Educators can see clearly which skills need improvement, and in some cases criterion-referenced tests even suggest strategies for overcoming the problems.

Before a school places a child in a learning disabled program, the parents, school administrators, regular and special education teachers, school medical staff, counselors, social workers, and district psychologists and diagnosticians must meet to discuss test results and decide how best to serve the child. Sometimes those meetings also include representatives from community agencies, as well as doctors, lawyers, and professional consultants hired by either the school district or the parents to prove or disprove that placement is appropriate. If it is established that for some reason the parents can't act on their child's behalf, the courts may appoint a guardian or surrogate to act as a legal education representative for the child.

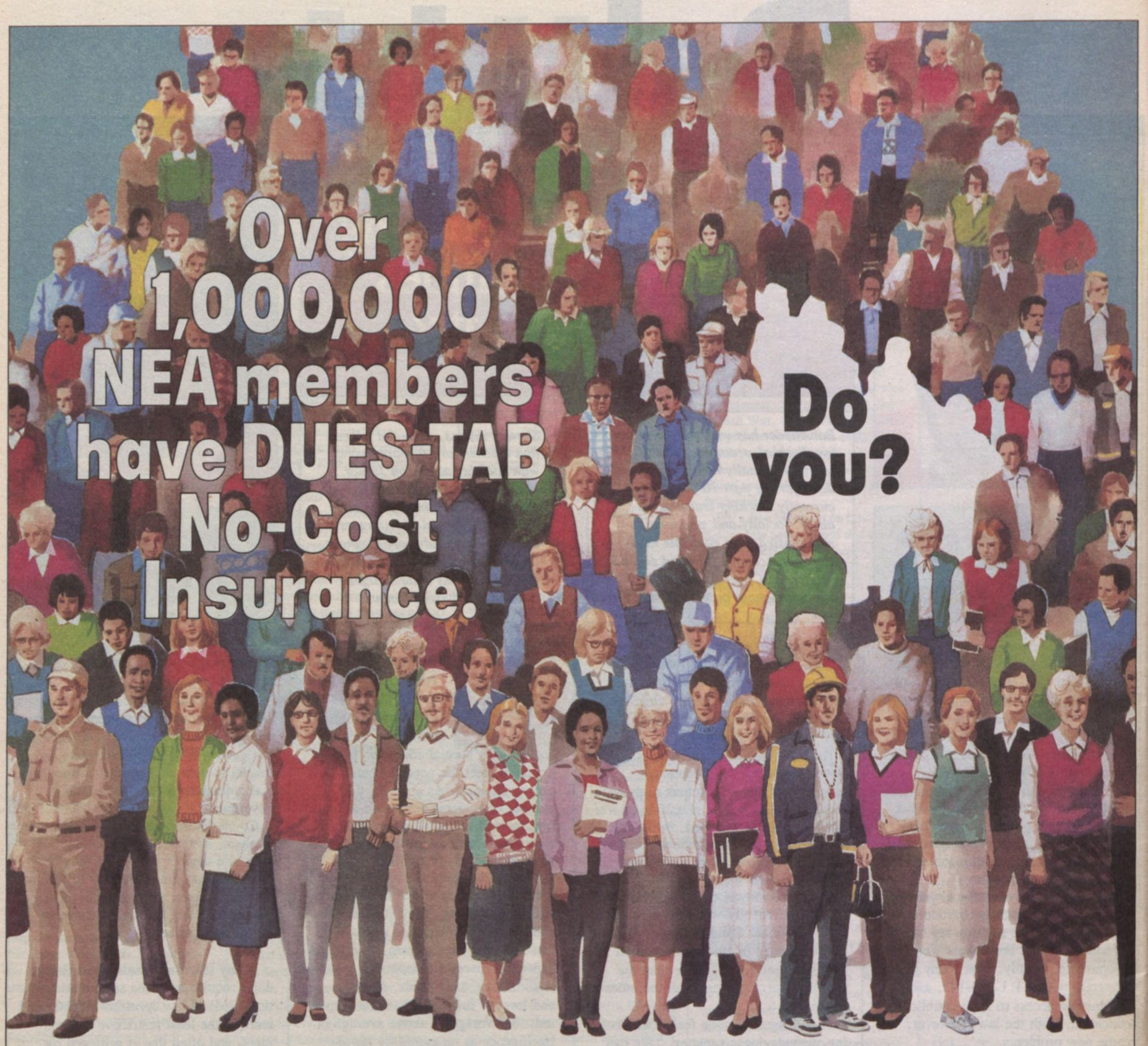
Parents who disagree with a decision to place their child in a special education program may appeal. The appeals process varies from state to state and district to district, but must follow general guidelines set by the federal government.

Communication between parents, teachers, and specialists continues as long as a student is in a learning disabilities program. Parents or teachers may request a reevaluation at any time if they feel the placement is no longer appropriate.

Many learning disabled students don't require full-time special education. Federal law specifies that students learn in the least restrictive environment, and often that is achieved by placing the children in a regular classroom and letting them work with a specially trained teacher anywhere from 20 minutes to a half-day. Some children with minimal learning disabilities are able to spend a full day in a regular classroom because a consultant can meet with them after normal school hours.

For every child in a learning disabled program, the federal government requires the school district to work out an "individualized education program" and reevaluate the plan every three years. Also, state departments of education periodically monitor all special education programs and placements within their boundaries. The monitoring involves surveying parents, regular and special education teachers, and school administrators about the effectiveness of programs within their district. This state monitoring serves as a check to ensure that no student has been misdiagnosed as learning disabled.

As educators, it is our responsibility to ensure that the identification, evaluation, and placement of each learning disabled student is appropriate. And by following federal and state regulations, we're doing just that. □



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